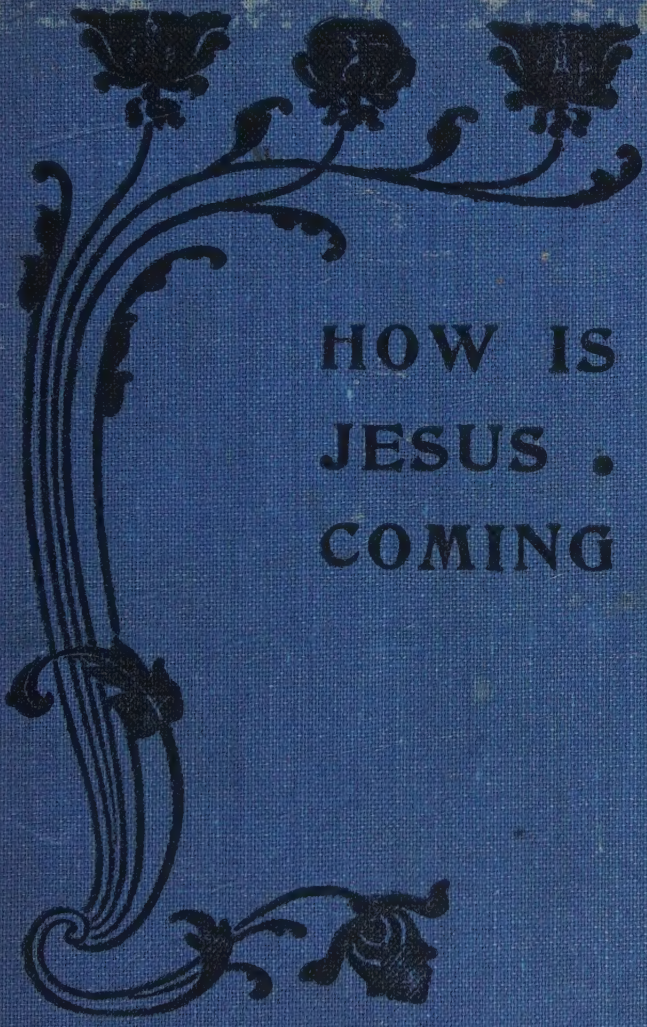

HOW IS JESUS COMING

ROBERT MIDDLETON

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HOW IS JESUS COMING?
AND FOR WHOM?

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By The Rev.
ROBERT MIDDLETON, B.D., D.Litt.

MARSHALL, MORGAN & SCOTT, LTD.
LONDON :: EDINBURGH

Popular (14th) Edition

Preface

IT has been a great joy to me to pen the chapters in this book. There is always, I believe, a very special and definite blessing given by God to those who seek to spread the knowledge of this most important and delightful subject. The Bible is full of it. The New Testament leads us constantly on from the first to the second coming. Every time I speak or write on this subject I cannot but conclude, from the blessing I receive, that God gives special blessing, over almost all other subjects, to its dissemination.

My humble hope and trust is, that these pages may be greatly used of God to help many of His dear children to more simply and clearly understand How Jesus is coming, and for whom.

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The Second Coming of our Lord Jesus Christ

I PURPOSE, by God's grace and help, to take my readers through this subject in a series of chapters written *as simply and systematically as possible*, so that those who desire to get a grasp of the subject may do so without the perplexities which generally are supposed to cluster round this study.

In these last days, when the signs of Christ's coming seem to be brought before us constantly in the events which are taking place almost daily, and with astonishing rapidity, it behoves the earnest, consecrated child of God to seek to know as much as possible of the return of that Lord and Master whom he is now serving, and in whom are centred all his hopes for this world and the next. The children of God are beginning to be really aroused as to the importance of this subject, and are seeking, more earnestly than ever before, to be ready when the Master comes. For this we praise God with all our heart. Still, there is a *really lamentable amount of ignorance* on this subject, and we pray that God may use this little book to enlighten many of His children, so that, with lamps

trimmed, and loins girded, they may be found *prepared and waiting* when Jesus comes.

In order to better understand the "*second coming*" of Christ, we must briefly refer to the *first* coming.

It is now nearly nineteen centuries since Jesus Christ came down from heaven to Palestine, and presented Himself as *King of the Jews*. As such He was rejected. The chief priests cried out: "*We have no king but Cæsar.*" The title written over the head of Jesus when *on the Cross* being, "Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews." Thus He was rejected and crucified by His own people, who "received Him not" (St. John i. 11).

Now the rejection of Jesus Christ by the Jews is important for us to remember inasmuch *as it opened up the way* for the building of the Church of God, which was chosen in Him before the foundation of the world (Eph. i. 4, 5; Rom. viii. 29, 30; Rom. xi. 11).

It will help us if we consider briefly three distinct promises given by Christ before His final rejection as Messiah, and before the crucifixion, viz.:—

1st. That the Holy Ghost should come to the earth.

2nd. That He (Christ) would build His Church.

3rd. That He would come again.

THE FIRST PROMISE (St. John xiv. 16, 17). This was necessary for the disciples, to whom the promise was given in order that they, and the Christians whom they represented, should understand Christ. Both Himself and His mission of salvation had been greatly misunderstood by His disciples, and, as Christ was going away and they were to be left behind as His chosen witnesses, the Holy Ghost

was to descend, *fill* them with all power from all high, *fit* and *equip* them with true understanding as to the purpose of Christ's glorious and perfect salvation on Calvary; *teach* them, *lead* them into all the truth, and *send them forth* as ministers of reconciliation and Ambassadors for the risen and ascended Saviour.

This promise was thus fulfilled on the day of Pentecost, when the Holy Ghost descended and filled the disciples and others with His wondrous transforming power (Acts ii. 1–4).

THE SECOND PROMISE (St. Matt. xvi. 18). "Thou art Peter (πέτρος—a piece of rock), and upon this rock (πέτρα —of which thou art a piece) I WILL BUILD MY CHURCH" (1 Cor. iii. 11; Eph. ii. 20). This you will notice is the future tense—I *will* build. The building was to be built by Christ Himself, and in the future from the time when He gave the promise. We believe *the building was commenced on the day of Pentecost*, when three thousand living stones were built into the Temple of the Holy Ghost (St. John iii. 5, 6). This we regard as *the birthday of the Church of God.* And in Acts ii. 47 we read: "And the Lord added to them day by day those that were being saved." Ephesians ii. 21, 22: "All the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord; in whom ye also are *builded together for a habitation of God through the Spirit.*"

Thus, *the Tabernacle* and *the Temple* of old, in which *the Shechinah* or presence of God had dwelt until sin and disobedience had so grieved God, that He took away His visible presence from the midst of His people—these were

then but the type of that Temple in which the long-lost Shechinah should take up his *permanent* abode (St. John xiv. 16), *i.e.*, in the bodies of His people, who would constitute His Church. "What? Know ye not that your body is the Temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you" (1 Cor. vi. 19).

Now the Church (ἐκκλησία, or called out) is composed, not exclusively of members of any one denomination, but of all those who have received the Spirit of Adoption and Sonship in the family of God, through the atoning blood of Christ (Rom. viii. 15). "For *in one Spirit were we all baptised into one body*, whether Jews or Greeks; whether bond or free; and were all made to drink of one Spirit" (1 Cor. xii. 13). St. Paul also tells us that we are "built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets (N. T. prophets), Christ Jesus Himself being the Chief Corner Stone" (Eph. ii. 20).

Thus, *the Church, which is composed of all truly converted men and women* (irrespective of outward sectarianism), is being built *by Christ* daily. Christ's work is to bestow salvation, *i.e.*, to build; the Spirit's work is to fill, teach, equip and use for God's glory every stone which Christ builds into His temple. Christ is thus, whilst seated at the right hand of God, building by His Holy Spirit the Church which He has purchased with His precious blood, and *making it ready* for the time when He will come and take it away from the land in which it is only a stranger and a pilgrim, kept by Divine grace, to its eternal home with Himself.

THE THIRD PROMISE (St. John xiv. 2, 3). "I go to pre-

pare a place *for you*, I will come again and receive *you* unto MYSELF, that where I am there *ye* may be also."

This promise was given to the disciples *as living men upon earth* by the Lord Jesus who was speaking to them. It was not a promise that He was going to prepare a place *for their souls*, but *for themselves* as living men with bodies as well as souls. Now, the facts of history prove that *the disciples died* in various parts of the world, and were buried, just as other people were. Then what about this great promise given by Jesus? The bodies of the disciples have been in the grave for over eighteen centuries and have no doubt *crumbled to dust* long since. The answer is obviously this. They are waiting for the promise of Jesus to be fulfilled. Hebrews x. 37: "For yet a very little while, and *He that* cometh shall come, and will not tarry." St. John xvi. 22: "I will see *you* again, and *your* heart shall rejoice." Hebrews ix. 28: "So Christ, having been once offered to bear the sins of many, *shall appear a second time*, apart from sin, *to them that wait for Him*, unto salvation."

Again, the promise of St. John xiv. 2, 3, was given to the disciples on *the night before the Crucifixion* of Christ, when they were all assembled with Him, and when He instituted the Lord's Supper. This was to be observed not only by the disciples, but by all believers in Him until He comes again and the third promise is fulfilled. The promise of His coming again, the promised gift of the Holy Ghost, the commands enjoining obedience on all, the teaching of the vine and the branches were all given in Christ's last address in St. John, chapters xiv., xv., and xvi., and given to

the disciples in their representative and corporate capacity. Christ spoke to all the members of *the Church* through His chosen disciples, *because it was to be built upon the foundation of the Apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the Chief Corner Stone.*

Hence, when Jesus said, "I will come again and receive *you* unto Myself, He was really speaking, *not to the disciples only*, but to every believer who should accept Him in the coming centuries as His Saviour.

What a wondrous emphasis this puts upon the doctrine of the resurrection! "I will receive *you*." The body may turn to dust in the grave, but it is not lost. "As surely as God formed it in the first instance, so surely will He reform it in the next. And just as Joseph gave command that when *God's deliverance* came to Israel they were to take his body out of Egypt, so surely will the body be taken away from this earth by Jesus at the time of *our* deliverance. Philippians iii. 21: "The Lord Jesus shall fashion anew the body of our humiliation, that it may be conformed to the body of His glory." We are "waiting for our adoption . . . the *redemption* of our body" (Rom. viii. 23). The *redemption price* was paid on Calvary, but the *redemption power* will be put forth when Jesus comes to claim, to change, and to translate it. The souls of the disciples, as well as of all other believers, as soon as absent from the body *have been "present with the Lord."* But inasmuch as these are only disembodied spirits, and therefore incomplete, they are patiently waiting the time when they shall be "clothed upon" with their resurrected, glorified bodies, and *be like Jesus*, and with Jesus for ever.

"Now hath Christ been raised from the dead, *the first-fruits* of them that are asleep. . . . As in Adam all die, so also *in Christ shall all be made alive.* But each in his own order: Christ the first-fruits; then they that are Christ's at His coming." So, the disciples of Jesus, as well as your friends and mine, are *waiting for Jesus to come,* raise their bodies, and make them like His own, without liability to corruption.

The Coming of Christ into the Air for His Saints (παρουσία)

WE now come to the consideration of the part of the subject which *concerns us as Christians very closely*. The subject of Christ's immediate presence is, or should be, *the greatest stimulus to holiness of life*, by separating us from the world and separating us unto God (1 St. John iii. 3): "And every one that hath *this* hope set on Him (*i.e.*, the hope of being changed and made like Christ) purifieth himself, even as He is pure." To know that *before another hour has passed* we may be away from this earth with our glorious Saviour, must have the effect of leading us to "occupy till He comes" and to do His will whilst we are waiting for our translation to His home in heaven.

We must, however, not confound or confuse the coming of Christ *for* His children with the coming *with* His children. These are *two distinct stages* of the coming, as I shall endeavour to show.

The promise of St. John xiv. 1–3 is to "*you*," *i.e.*, disciples and believers. Verse 19: "The world seeth Me no more, but ye see Me."

In the first stage of the second coming of Christ, Christ only comes for His own people, the Church, His body, His children. He was rejected by the Jews and the Gentiles, both of whom conspired together to crucify Him. The only place that could be spared for the Christ of God was *a cross*, on which He was suspended between heaven and earth, *a spectacle to angels and to men.* And now we come to a most important fact, viz. :—*Since the time of His burial, He has not been seen by any unbelievers*, nor will He be, until He comes with power and great glory to the earth *to reign as King* in righteousness and to destroy the wicked (2 Thess. i. 8–9, Rev. i. 7). We are distinctly told *who saw Christ* after His passion (Acts i. 3). And in Acts x. 40, 41 : "Him God raised up the third day, and gave Him *to be made manifest*, NOT TO ALL THE PEOPLE, *but* UNTO WITNESSES that were chosen before of God, even to us who did eat and drink with Him after He rose from the dead."

The list of those who saw Him is given in 1 Cor. xv. 5–8 :—

He appeared to *Cephas.*

Then to the *twelve.*

Then to above *five hundred brethren* at once.

Then He appeared to *James.*

Then to *all the Apostles.*

Last of all "He appeared to *me* also."

Read also Luke xvi. 9; John xx. 15, 16; Matt. xxviii. 9; Luke xxiv. 13; John xx. 19; xx. 26; xxi. 2.

We are now prepared to ask the question: How will Jesus come?

We answer, *only in the presence of believers*, and *only in the air*, where His Church is to be caught up to meet Him.

Acts i. 11 distinctly shows us this. Christ had been speaking to and instructing the apostles (verse 2, etc.). And when, in verse 9, "He had said these things, as they were looking, He was taken up; and a cloud received Him out of their sight." Two angels then stated (verse 11): "*This same Jesus*, which was received up from you into heaven, *shall so come in like manner as ye beheld Him going into heaven.*"

Now, if we think for a moment of *how* Jesus went up into heaven, we shall easily understand *how* we are to expect Him to return.

1. He went away only in the presence of believers.

2. He went away *personally*, as a man with whom they had spoken.

3. He went away *secretly* so far as the world was concerned. No one in Jerusalem, Rome, Greece, etc., knew anything about it, as it did not personally concern them.

1. Then we notice that the coming of Christ for His children *does not concern any one else.* They have no part or lot in the matter. The world hates the true followers of Christ. They are too narrow, too bigoted, too exclusive to please the world. They cannot fraternise with the world, therefore the world dislikes and persecutes them. Worldly unconverted people are not ready to go to glory. They are seeking their pleasure and glory in this world. *They could not and would not be happy even if Jesus took them* away to heaven. They have not been living with or serving Him here. Their greatest satisfaction and joy

have been found in the things which do not please Him. *They are not born of the Spirit.* They are not *new* creations in Christ Jesus. They have no righteousness or holiness, without which no man can see the Lord. Hence the Lord Jesus is coming only for those whom He has already redeemed, washed from their sins in His own precious blood, led by His Holy Spirit, and kept by His infinite grace. He knows each one. He calls each of His sheep by name, and each name is written in the Lamb's Book of Life, which is the family register.

But some may say: If Christ comes for His own, *will not the world* see Him and be aware of what He is doing when He takes away His children? We reply, not necessarily so.

In 1 Thessalonians iv. 16 we read *the manner of His coming*. "*The Lord Himself* shall descend from heaven with a *shout*, with the voice of the Archangel, and with the trump of God." Again, 1 Corinthians xv. 52: "*The trumpet shall sound.*"

Taking illustrations from other parts of Scripture, we seem to conclude that the trumpet sound, even though heard by others, will probably only be *understood by those* for whom it is intended. In St. John xii. 28, 29, when God spoke to Jesus, those standing by said that it thundered; others said an angel spoke to Him. *Only the one addressed* by God understood. Again, Acts ix. 4, 7 furnishes another illustration of the same kind. Only Saul knew what was said by the Lord, because he was the only person concerned. It will also help us to remember that at Christ's first coming, THE STAR was only seen, under

stood, and followed *by the wise men.* Probably numbers of others saw the star with their eyes, but they knew nothing whatever of its special significance. THE ANGELS, who announced the birth of the Saviour to the shepherds, were only seen, and the message of peace heard, *by the shepherds* on the plains of Bethlehem. The world was asleep and utterly ignorant of the momentous event of the advent of the Son of God to the earth, or the angel's message. Again, in Exodus xix. 16–19, only Israel, not the nations, heard and knew what was taking place; the Assyrians, Egyptians, etc., knew nothing about these great events at Sinai. Or, our last illustrations, Luke ix. 35 and Matthew xvii. 5: only the apostles heard, the world being in ignorance of the transfiguration scenes and words from heaven.

We thus believe that Christ will suddenly and secretly take away His Church, which is composed of all blood bought, saved men and women.

Let us notice a few illustrations of this from Old Testament types.

1. "*Enoch was not*, for God took him" (Gen. v. 24). Suddenly and secretly he went. He was missed, but none knew anything as to where Enoch had gone, or how. His house was empty, his premises were left behind, but *Enoch was not. Noah* and his family were safely *shut in the ark by God* before the flood came to bring its desolation and horrors upon the earth. We believe this is a distinct type of the Church being taken to be with Jesus *before* the flood of misery bursts upon a Godless and sinful world, so that when the terrors of *the great tribulation* are being enacted,

God's children may be in a place of safety and rest with Jesus Himself.

Again, you remember how, in the nineteenth chapter of Genesis, when God was about *to destroy Sodom and Gomorrah by fire*, the Lord hastened Lot, his wife, and daughters (verse 16), laying hold of their hands, and *bringing them forth* from the city of destruction. And in the 22nd verse the Lord said, "Haste thee, escape thither, for *I cannot do anything till thou be come thither*." This, surely, is a type of Jesus and the Church. He will not bring any of the awful plagues and horrors of the great tribulation upon the unsaved world, *until* His Church, His saved ones, are safely lodged with Him in His Father's house.

The case of *Elijah* also supplies us with a type. *When God wanted him in heaven*, the horses and chariots of fire came, and whilst the nation little guessed what was taking place, *Elijah was translated bodily* from earth to heaven, leaving no vestiges behind of his departure. The sons of the prophets sought for him, and sought diligently, but Elijah was in heaven, and therefore could not be found on earth

The Secret Rapture

PROBABLY the greatest terror and confusion which have ever seized the mind of man in any age will be witnessed when this takes place. For all the believing, God-loving, Christian people to go away from all parts of the earth in a moment of time will make a much greater disturbance of the world's machinery than most people imagine. They are a greater power on earth at the present moment than worldlings are willing to admit, and but for the presence of the "Salt of the Earth," things in every department of life and work would be very greatly different from what they are.

I do not wish to draw any unreal, highly coloured picture before your eyes, but in the plainest language possible, put before you a few of the facts which must of necessity be realized when Christ's people suddenly go.

And, bear in mind, only those who *really are His* will be caught up to meet Him in the air. A religious profession or exterior will not suffice them. Christ knows His sheep and calls them all *by their names.* Suppose some child came into your house, got some clothes belonging to your child, and learnt some of the phrases and

sayings of your children. Suppose this child thinking itself fully equipped and entitled to do so, sat down with your children at your table, calling you "father" or "mother," and seeking to pass as your child. Would you be able to accept that strange child as yours? Father, would you detect that fraud? Mother, would you? So will it be when the Lord Jesus comes. He *knows* all those who have accepted Him, and whom He has washed in His precious blood from all their guilt and sins.

And now, let us think for a moment of what the practical effect will be when the Saints are called away.

Take a walk down into the city. Why are so many people looking about them half vacant, half scared? They all seem as if they have lost something or someone. Presently a lady whom you know comes up to you, and says in a half bewildered tone, "Have you seen my husband?" "No, why? have you lost him?" "Yes, we were walking together a few minutes since, and talking, when suddenly he disappeared. I don't know where he is. I heard several strange noises, half like thunder, and as I was rather frightened, I looked up at the sky, and then said, 'Why, William dear, what was that,' and I turned to him, but he was not there. *Do* tell me where he is!"

Proceeding a little further you meet another friend, who stops you and says, "Oh, I am so glad to meet you. I'm in such great trouble." "What's the matter?" Explaining, she says—"Oh dear, I heard such thundery noises, and became so frightened, I said to the dear children, just let me look and see if there is a bus going our

way, and we will go home. I looked round, but when I called the children they had gone. Oh, DO help me to try and find them. I cannot understand it at all. They never went away from me before. Yes, they have gone!"

And as you go further into the city you find hundreds of distracted people. Each one has mysteriously and suddenly lost a relative or friend. No one has seen them go. No one knows where they are. They are simply missing.

Without previous warning, those left behind will find that Christ has suddenly called away the salt of the earth, His loved ones, those redeemed by His blood, to be with Him for ever.

Families will be separated, one taken and the other left; wives will bewail the sudden disappearance of their husbands, husbands will bemoan the loss of their wives. Parents will search in vain with terror-stricken faces for their children.

All business will, for the time, suddenly come to an end. The railway whistle will temporarily be hushed. The railway systems will be disorganized. So many signalmen, engine drivers, booking clerks, and others will have gone, that the whole workings will be thrown into confusion.

The great mills and ironworks will cease their work without orders from the firms. Why? So many of the head men, the engineers, foremen, members of the firms and others will be missing, that it will be impossible to carry on the work. Besides, the employées who are left will be so unfitted for their duties. They have all lost their

dear ones. The holy ones, whose lives on earth have been lived in the power and light of the promise of Jesus, have now gone to be for ever with the Lord.

Society will be unhinged. *Music* will be either forgotten or hated, as seeming only to mock the prevailing grief. The *balls* announced will not take place. People will then say they cannot, dare not, dance. *Concerts* long arranged for, and eagerly expected, will be indefinitely postponed. *Theatres* will be deserted. *Parties* provided for will receive no guests. An awful sense of terror, foreboding and awe will seem to pervade everybody and everything.

One thing which will most probably contribute largely to the prevailing misery will be, that as no one has any heart left for work, the gas works will be left unattended; the electric light will be left unreplenished. The towns and cities being left in darkness will add to the fright and terror, and probably many will lose their reason with the strain and shock of trouble at this time.

But let me remind you of *the calamities which we must foresee will take place.* Look at that express train running at forty-five to sixty miles an hour. Numbers of passengers are in it Some of them belong to God, some do not. Look at it speeding nobly along. But, listen, the voice of Jesus calls the engine driver and stoker, as well as numbers of the passengers. Instantly, quicker than the lightning flash, these all obey their Master's call. The train is lighter in its burden, but the steam is on, and the train dashes forward. The driver and his companion were called and had no time in which to shut off steam,

or attend to earthly things any longer. Thus the train will tear along heedless of signals or anything else, until an awful crash brings its mad race to an untimely end. Even then, the thought is awful. The wounded and dead are left. No nurses or doctors are sent. They are all too greatly filled with trouble and despair themselves at their losses, or too bewildered with numberless calls upon them to go. Besides, there is no engine to take them. The telegraph system is not working, and news cannot be transmitted. They must be left.

Or look at that steamer. Christ calls suddenly, and the captain and many of the crew are instantly taken away. Amid dangers known and unknown the scared passengers and remaining crew try to wend their way, or perhaps founder in the attempt.

Or look into that pointsman's cabin, that signalman's house. Those numerous levers work the different junctions in the metals and put the trains in the right tracks. One mistake made, or one inattention, may wreck hundreds of lives. Jesus calls pointsmen, signalmen hasten upward to glory, leaving the railway systems and all their responsibilities behind. With what result. Little imagination is required to picture, both on the railways and on the sea shores the awful scenes of wreckage, to hear the groans of the wounded and the wail of the dying.

God's people suddenly translated will be an awful time for the world.

In the terrible confusion and misery many will, no doubt, turn and seek comfort from the Bible. But even here the misery of their condition will dawn upon them.

Though many Bibles will doubtless be read, nobody will be found capable of explaining them. All the Godly ministers will have gone. Only the unsaved ones, who do not know Christ as a personal Saviour, will be left. Their usual preaching of sacerdotal error will be cold comfort for people who are almost half mad with terror and grief. Higher criticism will fall flat in the presence of the fact that the Christians have really been taken away, as the Bible said they would. Blind leaders of the blind, they will be more perplexed and bewildered than any one at seeing the huge and terrible mistake of their lives. Probably only a few will muster courage to ascend the pulpit on the following Sunday, and then only to confess to the sombre and miserable multitudes who crowd in, that they know not what to say or how to preach. Their teaching in the past had proved itself to be all wrong, and now, disconsolate, miserable, they confess they have no message, no comfort for themselves or others.

Everywhere, and under all conditions, the children of God will be suddenly caught up and instantly disappear from mortal gaze. That missionary in the midst of a crowd of natives to whom he is pleading about His Master, is, to their astonishment, missing. That Zenana lady reading the news of Christ's emancipation to her Indian sister, instantly vanishes and is sought for in vain by all in the house. That minister in his pulpit, waxing eloquent as he speaks of Christ's salvation, Christ's home, and the glory beyond, is at once taken along with many of his dear flock, leaving a half empty church, startled,

bewildered, frightened, to find out the sad fact that as they were not ready they were left behind.

What a joyous time it will be for the righteous! How gladly will thousands leap from their beds of languishing and suffering into the arms of Jesus. With what alacrity the poor of this world will leave behind their poverty, their cottages and cellars and garrets, for the blessedness, the wealth, and the mansions of the skies. In them, truly, the change will be glorious and welcome. What meetings in the air between the Saviour and His children, and what meetings between those who had long been parted.

We are expecting Him very soon, in fact He may come any day. *We believe there is now no prophecy to be fulfilled or event to take place which would defer the coming of our Blessed Master.* Of course people do not believe us when we tell them that Jesus is coming soon. God says, "There shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts and saying, where is the promise of His coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of creation" (2 St. Peter iii. 4). Again, "as it was in the days of Noah, so shall it be also in the days of the Son of Man. They did eat, they drank, they married wives, they were given in marriage, until the day that Noah entered the ark, and the flood came, and destroyed them all" (Luke xvii. 26, 27). How wondrous to know that, *at any moment*, the voice of the Archangel may be heard summoning us to rise and meet Jesus in the air. Jesus will bring the Saints, viz., all His children

who have previously died on earth, *with Him in their disembodied state.* They will then receive their bodies again, which will rise from the grave and be changed instantly and made like unto Christ's glorious body. We which are alive and remain, true Christians only—will ascend into the air with them to meet Jesus, and we shall also be changed and made like Jesus. From that moment we shall live and dwell with Christ our Saviour for ever Won't it be glorious? But oh! dear unsaved friend, what about YOU? You will be left behind on the earth, where the devil will be let loose and you will live amid the terrors and horrors of "The Great Tribulation." All the true Christians being withdrawn and all the restraints of sin being removed, human nature will have what it has long been seeking, viz., full liberty. You will then see what the world is like without Christ, but with the full power of Satan exercised. This may begin to-day. You may of course say impossible! So the people no doubt said the day when the flood came in the days of Noah. And the people did not and would not believe in the days of Lot, but that did not hinder the fire descending instantaneously from heaven and destroying them. All the unsaved ones are in a desperate position. When that day comes, and we are taken away, we shall be suddenly missed. You will call for a friend, but he is gone. You will keep the dinner waiting for your husband, *he is away*, caught up to be with Jesus. You will sit up all night waiting for your mother, but she will never come. *She is not on this world.* You will hear of some houses where the whole family

is missing. And you, mad with fear and dreading to see or speak to anyone for fear of what news you may hear, will be left behind, left behind, *left behind*! God help you whilst there is still time, to give your heart to the dear and waiting Jesus, so that when Jesus comes you may be found ready to meet him with real joy and unspeakable gladness

The Judgment-seat of Christ

IN our last chapter we saw that all those who were ready for Christ, whose sins were forgiven and whose names were written in the Lamb's Book of Life, were caught up to meet the Lord Jesus in the air, *i.e.*, both those who were alive on the earth, and those whose bodies were asleep in the graves.

We now follow them in the events which are to take place, and we see that they are all to "stand before the judgment-seat of Christ." "Every one of *us* shall give account of himself to God" (Rom. xiv. 10, 12).

Now the question will naturally arise as to what is to be the character or purpose of this judgment.

In the first place, it is obvious that *it is not to judge us on account of our sins*; because whilst we are upon the earth "the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth *us* from ALL sin" (1 St. John i. 7). "He that heareth My word . . . hath eternal life, and *cometh not into judgment*" (St. John v. 24). "There is therefore *now no condemnation* to them that are in Christ Jesus" (Rom. viii. 1; Heb. x 14, 17). Sin was dealt with by Christ on Calvary, and a full, perfect, and sufficient atonement made for it there. The believer is justified and sanctified whilst upon the

earth (1 Cor. vi. 11). He is also made holy, for without holiness no man shall see the Lord. Therefore each believer, as one of God's own sons, accepted in the Beloved, cleansed from all sin through the blood of Jesus, is able to stand before God.

In our last chapter we also saw that the believer was not only "caught up," but *his body changed*—made like Christ's glorious body, and therefore immortal and beautiful. This, therefore, emphasises the fact that the judgment-seat of Christ *is only for believers.*

It may also help us to notice the expression of St. Paul in 2 Corinthians v. 10: "*We* must all be made manifest before the judgment-seat of Christ." St. Paul was a Christian, and as such he was writing to the Christians or saints in Corinth. This shows us what constitutes the plural *We—i.e.*, St. Paul and all the other saints of God. It is important to remember this, because it will help us to keep our minds from confusing the judgment-seat of Christ *for believers*, with the judgment of the great white throne, which is only *for unbelievers*, and is not until the end of the Millennial period.

The judgment-seat of Christ is for *glorified saints* who are already with Christ, and who are to be *judged for their rewards:* "Behold, I come quickly; and *My reward* is with Me, to give to every man according as his work shall be" (Rev. xxii. 12). Remembering the fact that the believer has been judged for sin, in the person of Christ on Calvary, whilst on earth, it is now clearly to be understood that *this judgment is of his life as a Christian*, from the time that he was born into the family of God and made God's child, to

the time of his death or translation to heaven as the case may be Christ, since His ascension, in Acts i. 9, so far as the earth is concerned has been an absent Lord. *All His work* of love and salvation in the world, therefore, is done *by means of His children on earth*, who are commissioned in His name to preach His Gospel and tell of His salvation. "We are His ambassadors, as though God did beseech by us"; we are also fellow-labourers together *with* God (2 Cor. v. 20, vi. 1). As new creations in Christ Jesus *in* the world, yet *not of* the world we are to live our Christian lives *to* Him, *for* Him, and *with* Him. Therefore, as *we individually* are to preach the Gospel (of an absent Saviour bodily) to every creature, and as none of God's children are exempted from this command, *we are to render unto God an account of what our Christian life and testimony* have been, so that He may reward us according to our works.

It is a matter of real comfort to me, as I contemplate this judgment-seat of Christ, that we shall already be glorified and like Christ. We shall then "know even as we are known." We shall have the *mind of Christ* about every thing and every subject. Otherwise, how could we retain any happiness? How could happiness in His presence be possible when our Christian life is weighed up and unsparingly judged?

Let us think of this. Our works (1 Cor. iii. 12) are declared by God to be of *two qualities* :—(1) Gold, silver, precious stones, *i.e.*, precious in the way of being costly, like the huge stones of the temples of many Egyptian buildings, some weighing over one hundred tons each

These would be precious or costly. They would also be durable, permanent and strong when built into a building. The gold and silver were for the embellishment, the beautifying and enrichment, of the strong, costly building. (2) The wood, hay, stubble buildings—such as are often put up on the banks of the Nile for the shelter of those labouring in the gardens—which are of the most flimsy and temporary character, and liable to be swept away at the next inundation of the river.

These *two classes of works* no doubt represent: (1) that which is done in the power of the Spirit of God, at the bidding of God, and to the glory of God; these and all such works are solid, permanent, beautiful: whilst (2) those that are done in the mere energy of the flesh, without prayer, without the power and the leading of the Spirit, are of man, and therefore will not stand the test.

All our works are to be tested *by God*. "Every man's work . . . *is revealed in fire*, and the fire itself shall *prove each man's work* of what sort it is."

Only think, dear fellow-believer, of what this time will be to you and me! Standing with Christ and all the glorified ones whilst all our *sermons* are passed in the crucible through the fire. They are to be judged by the standard and fire of God's holiness. "That which is born of the flesh *is* flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit *is* Spirit" (St. John iii. 6). How quickly all the attempts at *eloquence*, all the *tonings down of truth* for fear of offending our people, our *desires for praise* at the mouth of our leading members, our *fleshly energies* when cold in heart and out of touch with Jesus, *our lack of love* when speaking to

immortal souls,—how quickly all such parts of the sermons will catch fire and burn up, until that which has cost us much labour and weariness when on earth, will be seen a mere heap of ashes in the presence of the King.

Unless we had the mind of Christ concerning these things, hating even the garment spotted by the flesh, desiring nothing to remain except that which will glorify God for ever—it seems to me that even heaven and Christ could hardly keep up *from being overwhelmed with grief and shame.* But, *having* the mind of Christ, we shall be *glad to get rid* of everything unholy or fleshly, and to see it no more again for ever.

Sunday-school teacher, you will see *all* your lessons pass through the fire. Oh! how half-hearted some of them have been. How unspiritual! How mechanical! How far short of the earnestness and power which might have been expected from one who was *sent to lead young souls to Christ!* Your soul was so faithless, you *never expected* your scholars to be converted, and you thus limited the power of God. How much of the hard, laborious work will stand the test of Holy Ghost fire?

All our work must *pass through the fire.* Yes, even the missionary's work. Why did he go abroad? Was it partly for fame and partly for Christ? How has he worked among the heathen? Has he so shone with Holy Ghost power and fire that dark souls have been attracted to his Master and Lord? Has he lost heart or leaned on self? All the works and actions of life will go through the fire, and the fire will prove each man's work of what sort it is.

Mission preacher, district visitor, tract writer, and all

dear Christian workers, let us remember that *each day's work has to go presently into the crucible* to be tried by fire, and only that which is done on Holy Ghost lines, in the power of the Spirit of God can be acceptable to Him. *Spiritual results can only be effected by spiritual means.* Oh! how many earnest wearisome efforts of over-burdened workers will all have to be burned up in that day? How many smoking and other concerts, penny readings, so-called sacred concerts, etc., etc., held for the purpose of *getting hold of the masses*, will be burned up? "*I*, if *I* be lifted up *will* draw all men unto *Me*." This is God's way, and He will accept no other. *No other will stand the fire.*

And now a few words about the rewards. In Daniel xii. 3, we read: "They that turn many to righteousness shall shine as the stars of the firmament for ever and ever." It seems to me that He will judge us by *the possibilities* of our lives, *i.e.*, by what in His grace we *might have been* rather than what we literally *have been*. God has made it possible for *all*, *every one*, of His children to *shine*, to live a *victorious* life, and to *glorify* Him, if only we will give ourselves up to Him to be fitted for and used in His service. Hence the loss will be to each of us far greater than we suppose. Still, our loss will be as nothing compared with the loss of glory to the Master Himself from our living on a *lower level* and having a *lower standard* than He had ordained for us. *The rewards to be apportioned* are very tempting, very definite, very glorious. Will you and I, dear reader, obtain them? (1 Cor. iii. 14), "If any man's work abide . . . he shall receive *a* reward"; (8th verse), "each shall receive *his own reward*

according to his own labour"; (15th verse), "If any man's work shall be burned, *he shall suffer loss.*" (1 Cor. iv. 5), the reward is, to publicly receive praise of God. (1 Cor. ii. 9), "*The things* which God hath prepared for them that love Him." (1 Cor. ix. 25), "*An incorruptible crown.*" (2 Tim. iv. 8), "The crown of righteousness"; (Jas. i. 12 and Rev. ii. 10) "The crown of life"; (1 Pet. v. 4) "The crown of glory"; (Col. iii. 24) "The reward of the inheritance"; (Phil. iii. 14) "the *prize* of the high calling of God."

Now, what should be the practical effect of studying the subject of the judgment-seat of Christ for believers? Should it not stimulate us to greater *holiness* of life, to closer *fellowship* with the Master, to stricter *obedience* of life in His service? Our true standard is, *whatsoever we do in word or deed*, do *all* to the glory of God. With this in view should it take us long to decide our relationship towards what are generally looked upon as doubtful matters for Christians, viz. :—The use of pipes and tobacco, the use of alcoholic drinks as beverages, the reading of novels, the attending of or singing at concerts, the occasional visit to the theatre. *Bring them all to the search-light* of God's fire and Holy Spirit at the judgment-seat of Christ. Test them there, and at once conclude what God would say of them. This is the true test for any doubtful thing. Will it stand the fire at the judgment-seat of Christ?

It seems to me also the right place in which to review and test our *income and expenditure.* In the light of God's command to evangelise the heathen, are we doing what we ought and *are expected* to do. Can we be doing what is

right whilst 800 millions are still *without* the knowledge of the saving Gospel of Christ, to let them die whilst we withhold our hands and our money? Can it be right to send so few to tell them of Jesus? Are we acting faithfully when all this vast multitude, more than half the world's population have never yet heard of Jesus and His love?

Is not the light of the judgment-seat of Christ also the right place in which to review *all our work* of whatever kind it may be? Let us look at it and judge it through God's magnifying glass, and get it put right now, lest it should have to be burned up afterwards.

And also *our life generally*. Are we full of the Holy Ghost in our *home life?* Are we shining for Christ in our *business?* Are our *characters* moulded on the Divine Model of holiness and Christlikeness. Are we a power for Christ when on our *holidays* by virtue of our holy living *in* Him and *with* Him?

Surely to honestly face these questions before God will be the means of equipping us and making us ready to wear the white linen . . . which is the righteous acts of the saints (Rev. xix. 6–8), and which is given by the Lord to those who are tried and found faithful.

The Marriage of the Church to Christ

IN our last chapter we saw that every Christian life was brought to the search-light of God's holiness, and that, after taking away all the dross of self and all that belongs to this world, Christ rewarded His own dear children for all the work done through the leading of His Holy Spirit, and thus in purity of motive.

And why? Nothing that is unholy or unfit for the unsullied purity of heaven was fit to be retained. Everything connected with Christ is perfect, and He could not allow those who were to be His special treasure, His Church, His Bride, to possess, or be rewarded for, anything which was not as pure as Himself. Hence, His Church must be made ready for the grand and great honour to be conferred upon her. Ephesians v. 25–27 tells us plainly, "Christ also *loved* the Church, and *gave Himself up for it*, that He might *sanctify* it, having *cleansed* it by the washing of water with the Word, that He might *present the Church* to Himself a *glorious* Church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing, but that it should be holy and *without blemish*."

A beautiful type is given us in the case of Adam.

Whilst *Adam* slept, *his side was opened*, and Eve was formed, who was to be his companion and friend. Whilst *Jesus* was on the cross, *His side was pierced*, the Church was redeemed; and, after being gathered together during the Christian dispensation, will be married to Christ. Hence 2 Corinthians xi. 2: "I have espoused you to *one husband*, that I may present you as a *chaste virgin to Christ*." Also read Ephesians v. 31, 32. Or compare Genesis ii. 23, where Adam said, "This is now bone of my bone and flesh of my flesh," with Ephesians v. 30, where St. Paul says of Christ, "We are members of His body, of His flesh, and of His bones." Christ Himself says (St. John xvii. 22, 23): "And the glory which Thou gavest ME, I have given them, *that they may be one even as We are one*, I in them, and Thou in Me. . . ."

Thus we see that the Church, having been made ready is arrayed in fine linen (Rev. xix. 7, 8), to be married to Christ, probably just before the beginning of the millennium, and during the time of the great tribulation on the earth.

EVENTS ON THE EARTH WHILST THE CHURCH IS AWAY WITH CHRIST.

The prophecy of our Lord in St. Luke xxi. 24—"They shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led away captive into all nations: and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, *until* the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled"—taken with Daniel ix. 27, Matthew xxiv. 15, etc., shows us clearly that, after the destruction of Jerusalem, the Jews were to be scattered among all nations. It also shows us that at the end of the dispensation they are to be

gathered together again in their own country in unbelief, where they will build a temple and seek to restore their ancient sacrificial services. But by this very deed they will be unconsciously paving the way for *Antichrist to set up in the holy place the abomination of desolation,* as foretold by Christ—St. Matthew xxiv. 15, etc.

We believe that the present signs of the times justify us in believing that we are *rapidly* nearing these events and that *they are in the very near future.* The extraordinary and unprecedented movements among the Jews at present —the numbers who have *already gone* to Palestine; the founding of the *Chovevi Zion Society*, with its network of branches all over the world, and its great object, the restoration of Palestine to the Jews; the meeting at Basle lately of an *international conference* of influential Jews with the same object in view; the *great expectation* amongst so many Jews of the speedy coming of *their Messiah,* and the great and *ever deepening desire* amongst them to get back to and live in their own land—not only these, but *the prevailing belief* that they are soon going back to become a nation once more; the *preparation of the materials* for the building of the temple; the *great schemes,* economic and political, put forth for acquiring and preparing Palestine—these and many other signs lead us to see very clearly that, with earnest and great national movements already being discussed and tested for regaining their own land, which are in the hands of skilful, learned, wealthy, and influential Jews, the indications point to an early fulfilment of their speedy occupation of Palestine.

It seems to me that all things are *fast ripening for the*

time of the great tribulation which is to come soon after the taking away of the Church. *The apostasy, or falling away from the truth*, is brought before us in the parables of Matthew xiii., the *tares* and the wheat growing together till the harvest, when the tares are to be burnt; the *leaven* of evil at work till the whole is leavened; the *mustard seed*, good at first, but presently developing, growing, until the birds of the air, which typify evil and corruption, could find a lodging, a resting place in it. All these describe *the condition of Christendom*, in which there is, side by side with the truth, the spirit of error working, growing, leavening the whole, silently but really. *St. Paul also describes the last days*, 1 Timothy iv. 1–3, when people give heed to "*seducing spirits*, and doctrines of demons." We have these forcibly brought before us in *spiritualism* with its seances, its communications with demons who personate the dead, its blasphemous literature and teaching, its contempt for the Divine institution of marriage, etc.

"*Speaking lies in hypocrisy*." We have even now unbelief which challenges the authenticity and veracity of God's truth. We have the Devil's delusive lie taught, that there is *no eternal hell*. We have conditional immortality thrust upon us as if it were truth, and we are taught by many that there is universal redemption for man, demon, devil, and evil angels. Many would have us believe that all are finally to be brought into and received in God's kingdom in glory. In this way 2 Timothy iii. 13, "Evil men and impostors shall wax worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived," is evidently brought before us in its initial stages.

"*Grievous times.*" Let us patiently read St. Paul's account of these which are prophesied as coming, 2 Timothy iii. 1–5: "*In the last days* grievous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of self, lovers of money, boastful, haughty, railers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural affection, implacable, slanderers, without self-control, fierce, no lovers of good, traitors, headstrong, puffed up, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God, holding a form of godliness, but having denied the power thereof."

Again, in 2 Thessalonians ii. 9, 12: "According to *the working of Satan with all power and signs and wonders of falsehood*, for those that are perishing, because they received not the love of the truth that they might be saved. And for this cause God sendeth them *a working of error*, that they should believe a lie, that they all might be judged who believed not the truth but had pleasure in unrighteousness."

It does not require much reflection to see how we are surrounded with all these signs of the last days, though they are yet only in their initial stages. *The full development will come presently*, growing more intense, until the Church is caught away, when the bud will burst into a full evil flower. I speak of the spirit shown by Socialists, Anarchists, Communists, Nihilists; the conflicts between capital and labour; the hungry spirit of pleasure-seeking pervading all classes of society; the increase of Sabbath-breaking, and the attempts to introduce a Continental Sunday by means of Sunday railway excursions, Sunday boating, outings, etc., etc.

These things, as well as the spread of worldliness and the down-grade movement in the churches, I believe, *are getting, and will continue to get, worse and worse*, until, when God's children are caught up, and their restraining influence is gone, the tide of wickedness will flow in rapidly as a flood upon a world which will greedily welcome it. St. Paul says, 2 Thessalonians ii. 7: "The mystery of lawlessness doth already work, only *until he that now restraineth be taken out of the way.*" This world, with no saints left in it, will then become rapidly a veritable hell upon earth.

The Earth, when the Church is away with Christ

BUT, although Satan is to have a wondrous hold on the minds and lives of men, he is not to have things all his own way. Suddenly, without warning, when men are fast becoming the very incarnations of all that is godless and abominable, when Satan seems to have unlimited sway, *God's two witnesses* (Rev. xi. 3) will be sent to preach the Gospel of the Kingdom, *i.e.*, *the Gospel of the coming King*, meaning that Jesus is coming presently to the earth to set up His millennial kingdom. This is what *we* now pray for when we say the Lord's Prayer, "Thy kingdom come." This gospel of the kingdom was preached by the disciples before the crucifixion, but it has now been in abeyance for 1800 years, seeing that Jesus as King was rejected and crucified. *It will be preached again* when the two witnesses of Revelation xi. appear on the earth. These are evidently Jewish, judging by the spirit they show and the things they do. They have *power to destroy* any enemies that would hurt them, by fire proceeding from their mouths. They have *power to bring famine and plagues* upon the earth. They have power to turn water into blood and to thoroughly defend themselves until their

days of testimony are at an end. Thus, for three and a half years these *two witnesses preach of the coming King*, Jesus Christ, to the dismay, anger, and wrath of Satan and his adherents.

Many of the best students of the Word believe these two witnesses will be Moses and Elijah, who came and spoke to Christ at His transfiguration, and whose characteristics the description in Revelation xi. seems to set forth.

The reference to their preaching is, I think, found in St. Matthew xxiv. 14, which, I believe, does not apply to our present dispensation at all, as *the gospel of the coming King is not now preached.* We preach Christ as "Saviour." As King He was rejected on earth, and the word of His rejection as King was put over the cross. But He is coming again to *be* King, and *to sit on the throne of His father David* in His millennial reign on the earth.

It appears to me, that all who are brought to accept Christ through the sudden taking away of the Church—probably many half-hearted, half-convicted ones will be brought out fully then — will all gather earnestly and eagerly round the wondrous leaders, Elijah and Moses, to preach this gospel of the coming King throughout the whole earth. Great numbers of those who dare to believe in and testify for Christ will be *slain as martyrs.* Listen to their cry in Revelation vi. 9, 10. Also read in verse 11: "And white robes were given unto every one of them; and it was said unto them, that they should rest yet for a little season, until their fellow-servants also and their brethren, *that should be killed as they were*, should be fulfilled." And again, the question in vii. 13: "What are

these which are arrayed in white robes? And whence came they? . . . These are they *who are coming out* of THE *great tribulation* and have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. Therefore . . . they shall *hunger* no more, neither *thirst* any more, neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat. . . . And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes." *These words have often been wrested from the setting* and context in which God has placed them, and applied to the relief of Christians from their present sorrows, when they die and go to be with the Lord. But you will see at a glance that they apply *to this special time*, and indirectly give us a glimpse of the sorrows of those bitter times when Satan with almost unrestrained malice is permitted to persecute them. It pictures them as without food, water, or homes, and hunted about from place to place. Hence the special comfort of being translated to glory, where God shall wipe away their tears and make them happy in His own presence.

But, although these two witnesses have self-protective power, and are such terrible foes to grapple with, and although, as I believe, they will be the leaders of those who preach or herald the news that Jesus as King is coming to set up His millennial kingdom, yet, *their time of witnessing is limited.* God only gives them *three and a half years*, after which their enemies are permitted to slay them, and to triumph for a brief period, until God's voice calls them again to life. They then visibly ascend to heaven in the presence of their enemies.

To me it appears to afford a crumb of comfort to God's

children to remember that the witnesses are to preach the Gospel *during* the tribulation. And for this reason. Many of us have unconverted friends and relatives. *We* expect to be suddenly taken from this earth when Jesus comes for *us*. *They* will of course be left behind. The thought that they would never hear the Gospel or have *an opportunity* of repenting when we are gone would be too awful to contemplate. Thank God, it will not be so. They will hear the Gospel and have an opportunity of accepting it, but with the full knowledge that by so doing they will expose themselves to the full fury of terrible persecutions, and probably martyrdom.

Let us now dwell for a short time on the powers which are prophesied to arise:—

The First Beast. If you will read Revelation xiii. 1–11, you will there find a vivid description of *the supreme secular power*, vested in some coming man who rises up out of the sea (of trouble and agitation). *His seat as king will evidently be at Rome*, as he is described as having "seven heads," and his authority will be over "ten kingdoms," as he is described as having "ten crowns." Possibly this means a renewal or re-forming of the old Roman Empire which consisted of ten kingdoms, and was governed from Rome as the central seat of authority. In the second and following verses the "beast" is spoken of as a man, a person, and is said to receive his power, authority, and position, or seat, from the Dragon, or Satan. In Revelation xvii. 12, 13, it is plainly stated: "And the *ten horns* which thou sawest are *ten kings*. These have one mind, and shall give their power and strength unto the beast."

In Daniel ix. 27, we read that in the last of Daniel's seventy weeks of years, this prince shall make a covenant with the Jews. The meaning of this is obviously: As soon after the rapture of the saints as this prince, or, as in Revelation xiii., beast, has by means of conquest and by the help of Satan obtained great secular authority and power, *he will proceed to make a seven years' covenant with the Jews*, who by that time will have largely returned to Palestine in unbelief and will have built or be building their temple. He will permit them to restore their sacrifices and ritual, which they will do. But in the midst of the week he will break his covenant with the Jews, and "cause the sacrifice and oblation to cease."

The Apostate Church. Many have often been sorely puzzled to know which church is meant, and *what constitutes the apostate church of Revelation* xvii. I believe it refers not to any particular church found on earth at the present time, but to the collective Church, or Christendom, at the period in which the description is found: Mystery, Babylon the Great, the Mother of Harlots and Abominations of the Earth, etc. At the present time we have a large number of sects or "isms" in connection with the profession of Christianity. These form the *outward* or professing church Some even arrogate to themselves, on the assumption of priestly authority and sacerdotal powers, the title of "*The* Church." But those who are correctly taught in Holy Scripture know that *The* Church is composed only of the elect or called-out ones, *i.e.*, those who have come out of the world and accepted salvation through the atonement of Christ alone. Now, when Christ comes,

He calls, not for any denomination, sect, or community, with or without a title, but for His sheep, His redeemed ones, His children. *He will gather them from all Christian denominations* in which they have gathered together for fellowship and Christian worship. And as *no community on earth* is composed only of believers, notwithstanding the many futile attempts of some to gather together only such, each community or sect will yield up to Christ at His coming, the true, blood-bought members of His family.

It needs no great stretch of imagination to picture what the professing Church or Christendom will be like when *the kernel is taken* suddenly out. Christendom with all its great organisations will still remain, but *the restraining influences and Holy Ghost power*, which were found in it on account of the presence of millions of true believers, will be there no longer. *The form of godliness* will be there in all its branches, but not the power. The huge carcase with its many limbs will be left behind *as a prey to any master mind* who can go in and take possession of it. All the converted ministers will have gone. All the Christians will be away. All the unsaved ones, with their unscriptural theories, their doubts and scepticism as to the truth of the Bible, will, after the first shock of losing the true Church, be ready to lead the spiritually untutored multitudes into deeper depths and higher heights of doubt, sin, and rebellion against God.

Present Preparations for Coming Events

IT may be helpful to many to have very briefly brought before them a few facts which will show how wonderfully and rapidly *the tide of current history* is leading us on towards the time *when Satan shall take the lead*, and have almost absolute sway, through the *first Beast* of Revelation xiii., or supreme secular power centralised at Rome, and also through the *Antichrist* or *second Beast* of Revelation xiii., who will have sway in all matters of religion and worship.

Now, no thoughful person can read his newspaper, or note the many and startling events following one another with wonderful rapidity, without seeing that we are living in an unnaturally strained condition in the world. Wars, rumours of wars, pestilences, famines, earthquakes, plots, assassinations, unrest, strikes, etc., etc. Still in the midst of all these htings there are *the greatest possible strivings after unity of action and of object.* Look at armed Europe. In spite of all the dissensions among the nations, we had the strange spectacle presented lately of six great powers combining together with a common object in view—six great powers sending their battleships to act together in common concert at Crete. That is to say, *a political combination on a very large scale has been proved to be possible.*

The great combination after the Church has gone is only to be of ten kingdoms. Surely this and other political alliances seem to be preparing the way for the coming further step of combining together the ten kingdoms. When this is an accomplished fact, as it soon may be, the next step will be to show they have the common object of establishing an universal religion.

Again, we see the principle acting with regard to the *labour movement*. Trades unions are the order of the day. *Great combinations* are gathering together in many parts of the world. An international labour movement has been started with the idea of enforcing uniformity in the hours of labour and pay. Men are not now free to work for their masters as they please, but are mostly members of unions which dictate when they shall work, what they shall do, and what they are to have for doing it. *Possibly, in the near future* we may find a committee sitting in London, or some other great centre, in touch with all the committees in other great centres, dictating what men in all trades and all countries, shall or shall not do. This is what the international labour movement aims at, and the wonderful strides and combinations made in connection with almost every section of labour makes such a thing not a fanciful dream but a comparatively easy possibility,

Or, look at *the ecclesiastical world.* What tremendous ideas there are of centralising everything! We had recently a parliament of all religions of the world meeting to compare notes, and, as many fondly hoped, to find a common basis or platform upon which all, whether heathen, Mohammedan, Jewish, or Christian, might meet.

Again, look at *the cry for re-union* in England; the *Lambeth Conference* of English-speaking bishops from every part of the globe; the *interchange of courtesies* between the Roman, Greek, and English Churches; English bishops going over to Russia to study and report on the Greek Church, with the idea of breaking down the existing barriers and of establishing permanent relationships of union.

But not only in the Church of England, but also *in the Nonconformist Churches* the principle of centralisation is rapidly working. A few years since, we were startled to learn that a plan had been formulated for combining five of our largest Nonconformist bodies into *one federation* entitled the "Free Church Movement." And now they claim to have a larger income, a larger membership, a larger number of Sunday-school scholars and teachers, than the Church of England itself. This remarkable movement, with its annual meeting of delegates from all the five great bodies, has for its head or chief one annually elected from one of the great denominations, of which it is comprised. But the great probability is that it will not long be a combination of five bodies only but with ever-extending arms will make itself broad enough to include every section of Nonconformity.

Thus, I have *very* briefly sketched the fact that politically the world is being prepared by means of international political alliances for the master mind and the coming prince who is to hold the reigns of government practically over the world. We have seen also that *commercially*, by means of great labour movements and unions, by focussing

and centralising the masses of workmen, the world's trade is being gathered into the narrowest possible compass. Again, we have seen how that *ecclesiastically* the various Christian systems are drawing towards one another with *the great idea of corporate and visible unity*. These, combined with the *remarkable movements among the Jews*, and their openly asserted determination to acquire Palestine for themselves as a nation; their constant inflow into the Land of Promise; the persecutions which drive them out of Russia and other countries; the yearning which is being daily expressed for the return to their own land; the establishment of the Chovevi Zion Society with its network of branches, having for its one object, the opening of the way for Jews as a nation to return; the preparation of materials for rebuilding the Temple; the great expectation amongst them that their Messiah is about to come to earth; the great schemes launched by Dr. Hertzl and others for their restoration; the international conference of leading Jews lately at Basle to consider how to prepare the way for their speedy return; the enormous financial help offered for this object by the rich bankers amongst them; the opening up of the country by means of railways; the withdrawing of restrictions in holding and purchasing land by them; the change of climate and the fulfilment of the promise to restore to the land the former and the latter rains; the planting of foreign vine slips according to Isaiah xvii.; the planting of orange groves at Jaffa; are all most striking and remarkable signs of the times we cannot afford to overlook or forget.

On the other hand everything points to the Jews as the

future occupiers of their own freehold. No other people would be allowed to hold it. International jealousies would prevent any single nation in Europe from acquiring Palestine for itself. The fact, is that the Jews are the only people whose occupation of the Holy Land *as a neutral or buffer state* under the consent of Europe, would satisfy the great powers.

All these and many other things indicate strongly to my mind, that events in every way are preparing for the speedy coming of that prince who will hold the reins of Europe, and at the same time make a seven years' covenant with the Jews as a nation *in their own land*

Antichrist

WE are now prepared somewhat to study this extraordinary person who is presently to arise and do wonderful things on the earth. The names given to the Antichrist in Scripture are very suggestive, very awful, and show us his character :—

1. The Son of Perdition (2 Thess. ii. 3).
2. The Lawless One (2 Thess. ii. 8).
3. The Man of Sin (2 Thess. ii. 3).
4. The Wilful King (Isa. xxx. 33–lvii. 9 ; Jer. iv., ix. ; Dan. xi. 36).
5. The Idol Shepherd (Zech. xi. 17).
6. Beast with Two Horns (Rev. xiii. 11).
7. Antichrist (1 St. John ii. 18–22 ; 2 St. John 7).

We further note that *he is probably a Jew*. (See St. John v. 43.) In Daniel xi. 37, it is said that he will not regard the God of his fathers.

G. H. Pember, writing of the Antichrist, says with regard to the memorable words in St. John v. 43, "I am come *in My Father's Name*, and ye receive Me not : if another shall come in *his own name*, him you will receive" :—

"Thus He intimated, that, since the world would have none of the Christ, the powers of darkness should be per-

mitted to dispatch to it *a rival* plenipotentiary corresponding to Himself. The Antichrist should come, and, as we may infer from other Scriptures, should be the effulgence of the Anti-God's glory, and the very image of his substance. For such, probably, is the meaning, or a meaning, of the similarity in form of the Dragon and the Beast of the Apocalypse. Compare Revelation xii. 3 and xiii. 1. *Again:* Just as the Father had committed all power to the Son, and had bidden Him sit upon His own Throne, *so* the Dragon should give his power to the Beast, and his throne, and great authority.

"In every particular the parallelism should be complete, even to the very period of manifestation. For as the Christ had borne testimony to the world, and *patiently endured* the contradiction of sinners, for *three years and a half*, until the end of which time no man could lay hands on Him, because His hour had not yet come, *so* the Antichrist should speak great words against the Most High, and should wear out the saints of the Most High, and think to change times and laws, and they should be given into his hands, until a *time and times and half a time* (Dan. vii. 25). And that we are correct in interpreting this expression to mean a year, two years, and half a year, or three years and a half, is certain; for we are elsewhere told that power should be given unto the 'Beast to continue forty and two months' (Rev. xiii. 5)."

Mr. Pember also adduces two other comparisons:—

"The Christ describes Himself as *the True Vine*, and the branches that abide in Him live by Him, and by Him are enabled to bring forth much fruit. Hence we may

regard Him as *the Tree of Life.* But, in the fourteenth chapter of Revelation, the Antichrist is called *the Vine of the Earth* (Rev. xiv. 18), and is revealed as the Tree of Death: for all the clusters are to be gathered by the appointed angel, and cast into the winepress of the wrath of God, to be trodden without the city (Rev. xiv. 18–20). Again, he that is joined unto the Christ is one spirit (1 Cor. vi. 17), and shares the life of the Christ. He also that is joined unto the Antichrist is one spirit with him and must share his death. If any man worship the Beast and his image, and receive his mark in his forehead or in his hand, he also—that is, as well as the Antichrist—shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is prepared unmixed in the cup of His indignation; and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb (Rev. xiv. 9, 10)."

The fact is, this "man of sin," this "lawless one," this "son of perdition," will evidently be *a mock Christ.* Many interpreters of the Word seem to think that the description of him in Revelation xvii. 8, as "the beast that was and is not, and yet is, and which shall ascend out of the bottomless pit," means that he will *a lost spirit brought up out of the abyss*, joined to a revived human body, and thus a contrast to Jesus Christ, who came down from heaven. He will come in *his own name*, and will be received. Christ came in *His Father's name*, and was rejected. He will be filled with great pride by the dragon, and speak great swelling words against the Most High. 2 Thessalonians ii. 4 tells us the position on earth which he takes: "Who op-

poseth and *exalteth himself above* all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God." In this he is contrasted with Christ, who said, "I receive not honour of men."

A TRINITY OF EVIL.

If you read Revelation xii. 9 you will see that, after *the war in the firmament* (heaven) described in verses 7 and 8, Satan is cast out of the position which he has so long occupied as the "prince of the power of the air," and with his angels is cast down to the earth. The 12th verse says, "Woe to the inhabiters of the earth and of the sea! for the devil is come down unto you, having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time." This is the signal for the outburst of terrible times. With *the first beast*, or supreme secular power invested in one who had ascended direct from the abyss, and the Antichrist as his vicegerent and false prophet sitting at Jerusalem; with Satan and all his angels dwelling on the earth, energising and empowering the Beast and Antichrist—can we wonder that, with such a display of evil power directed against God and His people on earth, the times of the great tribulation should break forth in the world.

Whilst *the great prince* displays his wonders, and leads the people (Rev. xiii. 4) to worship Satan himself, the Antichrist (Rev. xiii. 11), who had two horns like a lamb —thus imitating the Lamb of God, but who spake like a dragon—exerciseth all the power of the first beast before him, and causeth the earth and them that dwell therein *to worship the first beast*. Not only this, but by means

of the miracles he works, after forcing the people to make an image to the beast, *he causes it to speak*, and destroys those who would not worship the image of the beast. And in order that no one on earth might escape the worship of the beast, he causes all people, small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, to receive a mark in their right hand or in their foreheads; and that no man may buy or sell, save he that had the mark, or the name or the beast, or the number of his name (Rev. xiii. 11–17). Thus, universal Satan worship is insisted and enforced by means of what we term "universal boycotting," so that none may escape.

Jacob's Trouble

JACOB'S TROUBLE. Jer. xxx. 7: "Alas! for that day is great, so that none is like it, it is even the time of Jacob's trouble; but he shall be saved out of it." St. Matthew xxiv. 15–22: "Then shall be *great tribulation*, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be. And except those days should be shortened there should no flesh be saved." Daniel xii. 1: "At that time shall Michael stand up . . . and *there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was* since there was a nation, even to the same time; and at that time THY people shall be delivered."

The great climax of the great tribulation seems to be ushered in when at the end of the first three and a half years, the first beast, who had entered into a seven years' covenant with the Jews (Dan. ix. 27), causes the daily sacrifice to cease, and sets up the abomination of desolation in the holy place in the newly built Temple at Jerusalem. This is the signal for the flight as speedily as possible of the godly remnant at that time. Read St. Matthew xxiv. 15–23.

This is the time which is preceded by what is described in Revelation xvii. 16. When the Apostate Church, which, as we have seen, is a combination of Romanism, Spiritualism,

demon worship, and the deification of everything which is opposed to God, is to be dealt with and destroyed by the ten kings, who, confederated together had previously supported and given her her power. Just imagine what it will be like. The Apostate Church will have by this time gained all the great ecclesiastical positions in the wide world. The idea will have been carried out of perfecting a complete and world-wide system of priestcraft with all its attendant evils and terrors. All systems and sects will have subordinated themselves to this awful and gigantic power—except those faithful but persecuted ones who still worship Jehovah and acknowledge Jesus to be the rightful king.

With the people enslaved through this satanic human system, gorgeous ceremonials, processions, *permission of sin* under possibly an extended and easy system of indulgency, the powers of priestcraft will apparently seem impregnable. *But however securely sin is enshrined* in the life or affections of nations or people, its effects are always seen to be really *an intolerable burden* to those who practise it, and it nas always a tendency to cast aside all barriers, and restraints in its downward course. This is evidently what is found to be the case with the Apostate Church. Its position and assumptions by this time will have evidently become so intolerable to all classes of society that Revelation xvii. 16–17 says: "And the ten horns which thou sawest, and the Beast, these shall hate the harlot, and shall make her desolate and naked, and shall eat her flesh, and shall *burn her utterly with fire.* For God did put in their hearts to do His mind, *and to come to one mind*, and to give their kingdom unto the beast, until the words of God should be

accomplished." This means fearful strife in the world. With *the world-wide authority and autocratic pride* of a very highly exalted and universally acknowledged religious system, its power over the minds of men will be very great, and the action of the ten kings in undertaking to destroy it completely will probably be resented and opposed in villages, towns, countries and continents, thus causing awful bloodshed and universal strife.

The destruction of the Apostate Church, and the setting up of the abomination of desolation in the newly built temple at Jerusalem, is all in order to securely establish *the worship of the Great Dragon*, Satan himself. He is to be enshrined in this temple, and through his vicegerent and Antichrist, "sitteth in the temple of God, setting himself forth as God." Not only will Israel see their Temple polluted and themselves turned out of it, but they will be hunted from place to place, cruelly persecuted, boycotted, and many of them slain, because they refuse to render worship to the beast, his image, or Antichrist.

But the beast is not to have all his own way undisturbed. It will be found no slight or easy thing to hold Jerusalem for any power, and especially when persecuting God's ancient people the Jews: Zechariah xii. 2, 3: "Behold, I will make Jerusalem a cup of trembling unto all the people round about, when they shall be in the siege both against Judah and against Jerusalem. And in that day will I make Jerusalem a burdensome stone for all people: *all that burden themselves with it shall be cut in pieces*, though all the people of the earth be gathered against it."

The King of the North (Russia) seems to be the great

persecutor and scourge used in bringing about the greatest troubles of the Jews. In Isaiah xxviii. 15–18, we read: "Because ye have said, we have made a covenant with death, and with hell are we at agreement; when *the overflowing scourge* shall pass through, it shall not come unto us: for we have made lies our refuge, and under falsehood have we hid ourselves . . . *your covenant* with death shall be disannulled, and your agreement with hell shall not stand; when the overflowing scourge shall pass through it, then ye shall be trodden down by it." This King of the North is generally understood to be Russia, and its allies in the Kings of the East. Read Ezekiel chapters xxxviii. and xxxix. This is the monarch who will then be exercising sovereign power over the countries north, and north-east of Palestine. As we have seen the Jews had made a seven years' covenant with the prince who was energised by Satan himself; hence God speaks of it as *a covenant with death and hell*, and, in spite of the fact that they were under the protection of this beast or mighty prince, the king of the north or overflowing scourge should pass through the land and tread them down.

The final conflict. In Zechariah xiv. 2, we have an account of the great invasion of Palestine just before the Lord comes for the deliverance of His ancient people: "I will gather all nations against Jerusalem to battle; and the city shall be taken, and the houses rifled, and the women ravished; and half the city shall go forth into captivity, and the residue of the people shall not be cut off from the city." And in Zephaniah iii. 8, "My determination is to gather the nations, that I may assemble the kingdoms, to pour upon them

Mine indignation even all My fierce anger : for all the earth shall be devoured with the fire of My jealousy."

This will be the time when the Lord Jesus will appear in power and great glory, with all His saints from heaven, when He will deliver His people the Jews from the hands of their persecutors and oppressors (Zech. xiv. 3, 4), and set up His glorious millennial kingdom. But before we think of the glorious descent of Christ to the Mount of Olives, we shall have to devote some attention to the subject of the rebuilding of ancient Babylon, which we believe is to be restored.

The Rebuilding and Destruction of the City Babylon

IT may seem startling to some readers to even suggest such a thing, yet if you will follow me patiently for a short time you will see that this is no mere fancy.

Some have supposed that the 17th chapter of Revelation, which speaks of "Mystery, Babylon," is identical with the 18th chapter which speaks of a city Babylon. But there are reasons why we should believe they are distinct from one another.

Regarding the 17th chapter we are all agreed that the woman sitting on the seven hills is Rome. Romanism in combination with other forms of evil will, as we have seen, constitute the Apostate Church, which is *to be destroyed by the ten Kings* who have given her her power (Rev. xvii. 16). This is done to clear the way for the Reign of Antichrist, and the worship of Satan through him. The ecclesiastical power, therefore, of the Apostate Church is swept away by human opposition, viz.: by the ten Kings. In the 18th chapter, verse 9, the ten Kings *bewail* the fall of the city Babylon when they see the smoke of her burning; evidently by a divine judgment (verse 21) at the expiration of

the three and a half years of the reign of Antichrist, and thus three and a half years after the destruction of the Apostate Church.

Thus we notice the city Babylon of chapter xviii. has *a different name*, is destroyed at *a different time*, and in *a different way* to the "Mystery, Babylon" of the 17th chapter.

Now, in connection with

THE LITERAL BABYLON,

there were certain prophecies foretelling great judgments on the city which in their world-wide significance have never yet been fulfilled.

Let us look at them. Isaiah xiii. 6–13: "Howl ye; for the day of the Lord is at hand; as destruction from the Almighty shall it come. Therefore shall all hands be feeble, and every heart of man shall melt: and they shall be dismayed; pangs and sorrows shall take hold of them; they shall be in pain as a woman in travail: they shall be amazed one at another; their faces shall be faces of flame. Behold, the day of the Lord cometh, cruel, with wrath and fierce anger; to make the land a desolation, and to destroy the sinners thereof out of it. For the *stars* of heaven and the *constellations* thereof shall not give their light, the *sun* shall be darkened in his going forth; and the *moon* shall not cause her face to shine. And I will punish *the world* for their evil and the wicked for their iniquity; and I will cause the arrogancy of the proud to cease, and I will lay low the haughtiness of the terrible. I will make a man more rare than fine gold, even more than the pure gold

of Ophir. Therefore I will make the heavens to tremble, and the earth shall be shaken out of its place, in the wrath of the Lord of Hosts and in the day of His fierce anger."

I am sure no one can fail to see the close analogy between the above and St. Luke xxi. 25, 26, which describes *the time immediately before the coming of the Lord*: "And there shall be signs in the sun, and in the moon, and in the stars; and upon the earth distress of nations with perplexity; the sea and the waves roaring; men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth; for the powers of heaven shall be shaken." Now, as a matter of fact in history, Babylon has never been uninhabited. Its history certainly has been a most interesting and chequered one, but it has never ceased to exist. In the time of Alexander the Great, B.C. 331, it was a very powerful and important city. Even as late as the fifth century A.D. there were three Jewish Universities in the place. In the year 500 A.D. *the Babylonian Talmud*, now known and recognised as authoritative by the Jews of the whole world, was issued.

In A.D. 1585, Bishop Otto, in his history, thus wrote of it: "That portion of ancient Babylon which is still occupied is styled Baldach. . . The inhabited portion called Baldach is very large and populous; and, though it should belong to the Persian Monarchy, it has been conceded by the Kings of the Persians to their High Priest whom they call the Caliph; in order that in this also a certain analogy, such as has often been remarked before, should be exhibited between Babylon and Rome. For

the same privilege that here in the city of Rome has been made over to our chief Pontiff by the Christian Emperor, has there been conceded to their High Priest by the Pagan Kings of Persia, to whom Babylonia has for a long time been subject. But the Kings of the Persians—just as our kings have their royal city, like Aachen—have themselves established the seat of their kingdom at Egbatana, which, in the book of Judith, Arphaxat is said to have founded, and which in their tongue is called Hani, containing, as they allege, a hundred thousand or more fighting men; and they have reserved to themselves nothing of Babylon except the nominal dominion."

If you will turn to Isaiah xiii. 19–22 you will read: "And Babylon, the glory of kingdoms, the beauty of the children's pride, shall be as when God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah. *It shall never be inhabited*; neither shall it be dwelt in from generation to generation, neither shall the Arabian pitch tent there; neither shall shepherds make their flocks to lie down there," etc. Now, as a matter of fact, many travellers have seen both the Arabs and the shepherds with their flocks and tents amid the ruins of this great city. And again, Hillah, as it is now called, is well known to possess a population of probably about ten thousand persons.

But there is *one thing which seems to fix the period* when the real destruction of Babylon is to take place. If we carefully read the prophecies in Isaiah xiii. 19 to xiv. 4, Jeremiah l. 1–5, 17–20, 33–34, we shall find that on the overthrow of Babylon, the Jews as a nation are to be finally restored to their own land.

We are looking for

BABYLON TO BE REBUILT.

We believe and expect to see in a short time, a large and important city on the site of the ancient one, raised up as a great commercial and political centre.

The fertility of the land is well-known, and its resources are very great, if only by means of irrigation, etc., they were worked and developed.

You may ask, Why has not this country been taken in hand long since? The answer is simple: Because of the presence of and possession by "the unspeakable Turk." Herodotus and Strabo, as representing ancient historians, speak glowingly of its great fertility. Modern travellers tell us:—"The soil is extremely fertile, producing great quantities of rice, dates, and grain of different kinds, though it is not cultivated to above half the degree of which it is capable." "The soil is rich,' says another; "not less bountiful than that on the banks of the Egyptian Nile."

As Babylon is built on a splendid navigable river, she will evidently become one of the greatest emporiums of the world. Possibly, because of national jealousies, the ground will be held internationally, *i.e.*, held under the sway of the ten Kings, and will probably be the seat of the power of Antichrist. That the wealth of various nations is to pour into it is seen by a description of the goods, whilst the term "merchants of the earth," in Revelation xviii. 11, shows its universal commerce. Revelation xviii 12 speaks of "Merchandise of gold, and silver

and precious stone, and pearls, and fine linen, and purple and silk, and scarlet; and all thyine wood, and every vessel of ivory, and every vessel made of most precious wood, and of brass, and iron, and marble; and cinnamon, and spice, and incense, and ointment, and frankincense, and wine, and oil, and fine flour, and wheat, and cattle and sheep, and merchandise of horses and chariots and slaves; and souls of men." See Ezekiel xxvii. 13.

This setting in of the tide of prosperity—which is so well described in R.V. Revelation xviii.: "The kings of the earth lived wantonly with her"—will probably begin at the time when Antichrist comes into prominence at the middle of the time of the last week of Daniel. And why should we consider it very marvellous that this city should be rebuilt, and become again a great central mart for the merchandise of the world? Ever since 1850, the project of building a railway in the Euphrates valley has been contemplated, and we shall probably see it an accomplished fact very soon. In 1850, the British Government went so far as to send out General Chesney to survey and explore the river Euphrates, at a cost of over £30,000. And if we read the letter sent by Mr. Green, C.E., to Mr. G. H. Pember, we have additional evidence of the great importance of the position of Babylon from the testimony of even such a keen genius as Napoleon himself. He says:—

"About the year 1851, I was engaged by some eminent Parisian bankers to examine the country between Madrid and Seville with a view to the construction of a railway then in contemplation between the two cities.

Since there was at that time, as indeed there is at the present, a great scarcity of good maps and surveys of the district, access was procured for me to the department of the War Office in which were deposited all the valuable surveys made by order of Napoleon the First for the movements of his armies in Spain. With the assistance of a French draughtsman, who copied out whatever I thought likely to be useful, I examined many documents prepared for the requirements of the great Emperor, and among them found a survey of the river Euphrates. It contained a plan for a new Babylon, with quays, river walls, and other arrangements necessary for a large commercial city. Evidently the vast schemes of Napoleon comprehended the eastern as well as the western side of the old Roman Empire, and especially that wonderfully fertile portion of the Euphrates valley in the neighbourhood of the city of Babylon."

I cannot do better than quote from "Pember's *Great Prophecies*" (page 177), as to

THE POSSIBILITY OF QUICKLY REBUILDING THIS CITY.

He says :—

"Undoubtedly the rivalry of the nations would stimulate them to set in motion the whole machinery of their vast resources, with a view both to rapidity of building, and magnificence of architecture. And when we also remember that the attention of Satan and the whole kingdom of darkness would be concentrated upon the work, and all their power exerted to forward it, we may fairly suppose that the result would in some degree approach to the poet's fancy :—

'Anon out of the earth a fabric huge
Rose like an exhalation.'

Thus, just as Babylon—Satan's centre of the earth as opposed to Jerusalem—was originally built by a cosmopolitan effort upon which the judgment of God fell; so it would be resuscitated amid still grander displays of human power and pride, but only to be speedily and finally destroyed by the high hand and the outstretched arm of the Almighty."

Quoting further from Pember's work on Babylon:—"We are told of the godless city that she says in her heart: 'I sit a queen, and am no widow, and shall see no sorrow.' In the midst, then, of all her wickedness she is strong in confidence; for she has persuaded herself to deny the existence of the God who shall judge the earth. There is no preacher who can make her tremble with thoughts of righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come. The Nemesis of sin has enshrouded her with a thick mist; her eyes can no longer discern aught but the things which immediately surround her; she is able to go on filling up the measure of her iniquity without fear. Eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, buying and selling, building and planting, are all that can affect her. The grasp of judgment is upon the victim, and has already deprived her of feeling; even as the lion shakes his already secured prey out of sensibility before he tears it in pieces. She is heedless of the fact, long predicted though it has been, that the Divine preparations for her destruction are silently but ceaselessly going on."

Not that warnings will be wanting to her before the fatal stroke is inflicted. She is scarcely likely to be unscathed by the woes of the trumpets, certainly the vials will be poured out upon her, and she will probably be affected in a special manner by the darkness and pains of the fifth. The sixth will dry up the river which is her great medium of traffic, and change her source of health and fertility into a pestilential morass. Yet even against these miserable calamities she will struggle, and, possibly, not without some measures of success. But under the seventh vial she will come into remembrance before God for all her sins; the long roll of unatoned transgressions, even from the time of Nimrod, will be unfolded; and, amid the terrific earth-throes by which the cities of the nations are to be destroyed, she will fall to rise no more.

Yet, when her last morning breaks, she will apparently have recovered spirit after her previous troubles. Vigorous efforts will be in progress to revive the business and traffic injured by recent disasters: the days of feasting and wantonness will be returning; the theatres and ball-rooms will be thronged by animated and richly apparelled crowds, which, though they know it not, have made a covenant with death, and are at agreement with Hades, In many quarters ravishing music will be either charming those who, in restful complacency, are desiring such visions of enchantment as dulcet strains are able to waft, or will be soothing others who, vexed with disappointments, will not look to their Maker for consolation, but vainly cry—

"And ever against eating cares
Lap me in soft Lydian airs."

In the meantime, whilst all these excitements and pleasures are going on, as the gay equipages are speeding to and fro, and the busy streams of men and women pass up and down the streets, the avenging fire, deep in the bowels of the earth, unseen and unsuspected, will be making its way, and gradually and surely consuming all that supports the rock upon which the soil of the city rests, so that it may give way at the first shock of the mighty earthquake. And then great Babylon, with its broad streets and splendid squares, its incomparable architecture, its temples and palaces, its parks and gardens, its brilliant shops, its wharves and quays, and its vast harbours and docks with their forests of funnels and tall masts, will have disappeared in a moment, have sunk like lead into the fiery chasm long in preparation beneath it.

This is the destruction over which the mighty angel, with whose glory the whole earth is lighted, utters his pæan of joy. For the great centre of sin, the place of Satan's earthly throne, the main source of trouble and persecution to the people of God, has been suddenly removed, and now the kingdom of Antichrist must give place to the everlasting Kingdom of the Christ.

Glorious is the triumph which John hears in heaven. the mighty voice of a great multitude saying: "Hallelujah! Salvation, and glory, and power, belong to our God: for true and righteous are His judgments; for He hath judged the great harlot, which did corrupt the earth with her

fornication, and He hath avenged the blood of His servants at her hand."

And shortly afterwards, in place of Babylon the Great, the Mother of the Harlots and the Abominations of the Earth, there comes into view the Bride, the Lamb's Wife, the Jerusalem that is above, which is the mother of us all.

The Coming of Christ to the Earth, with His Saints

IN a previous paper we endeavoured to show that Christ has never been seen by any unconverted person or persons since the time of His crucifixion and burial on earth. He was sent away from the earth as the rejected King. Consequently, when He comes for His own people, this being a purely family matter, He will not be manifested to the whole world, but only to those whom it concerns, viz., the saints, or children of God.

But the time is coming when Christ will descend to the earth with power and great glory and kingly authority. He is to come at a most critical time for His people Israel, when all nations are gathered together to Jerusalem to battle. Zechariah xiv. 2, 3, 4 says: "Then shall the Lord go forth, and fight against those nations, as when He fought in the day of battle. And His feet shall stand in that day *upon the Mount of Olives*, which is before Jerusalem on the east," etc. (from which He ascended; Acts i. 11, 12).

And now occurs that wondrous event. Israel has been gathered to Palestine in great numbers and in unbelief. But Zechariah xii. 9–14, says: "I will pour

out upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplications, and they shall look upon Me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for Him as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for Him, as one that is in bitterness for his first-born." See also Zechariah xiii. 1; Isaiah xvii. 10, 11, xxviii. 14, 15. Thus a nation is born in a day. Israel, being delivered by her own Messiah, who appears in power and great glory, now nationally and gladly accepts Him.

If ever a wondrous sight was seen on earth, surely this will eclipse any which ever preceded it. Zechariah xiv. 5 says: "The Lord my God shall come, and *all the holy ones with Thee.*" Revelation i. 7: "Behold, He cometh with clouds, and every eye shall see Him, and they also which pierced Him, and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of Him." See also Jude 14.

The scene is simply this: After the marriage of the Lamb in Revelation xix., *Heaven opens*, and the glorified armies of Christ, composed of the saints who are clothed with white garments and are made like Him, follow Christ upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, pure and white (verse 14), as He goes to the earth. In righteousness He doth judge and make war (verse 11) Out of His mouth proceedeth a sharp sword, that with it He should smite the nations, and He shall rule them with a rod of iron (verse 15). In order that all may know who He is, His name (verse 16) is proclaimed to all the alarmed and awe-stricken inhabitants of the earth, as King of kings, and Lord of lords.

His comming is also unexpected at that time. See Luke xvii. 24, which says: "For *as the lightning*, when it lighteneth out of the one part under the heaven, shineth unto the other part under heaven; *so shall the Son of Man be* in His day." Thus suddenly, powerfully, gloriously He comes, and His redeemed ones are with Him, brought out in the fulness of their loving ardour *to be associated with Him in His great work* upon earth.

The Psalmist (cxlix. 6–9) says:—

> "Let the high *praises of God be in their mouth*,
> And a two-edged *sword in their hand*;
> To execute vengeance upon the nations,
> And punishment upon the peoples;
> To bind their kings with chains,
> And their nobles with fetters of iron;
> To execute upon them the judgment written:
> *This honour have all the saints.*"

The conflict will be between Christ and His glorified Saints, and Satan with his forces on earth. When Christ comes, this is what He finds, as described in Psalm lxxxiii. 3, 4: "They have taken crafty counsel against Thy people, and consulted against Thy hidden ones. They have said, *Come and let us cut them off from being a nation;* that the name of Israel may be no more in remembrance." Zechariah xiv. 2: "I will gather *all nations against Jerusalem* to battle." Revelation xix. 19: "I saw *the beast* and the *kings of the earth*, and their *armies*, gathered together to make war against Him that sat on the horse, and against His army."

Anti-Semitism, as it is called, or Israel-hatred, will by this time have reached its climax. All the nations agree

together that Israel must not be allowed to occupy Palestine any longer, or retain any national power. Contingents of troops from all the great powers acting in concert gather together round Jerusalem, with orders to entirely break up the newly acquired national status of the Jews and to scatter them over the face of the earth as fugitives. But the day of reckoning with the powers of evil will be at hand. Led on by Satan, deceived and pampered in all things of a Godless character by the Beast and the False Prophet, the nations are so blindly infatuated, and so desperately opposed to God's holy law and God's Holy Son, that they actually gather together in their foolish desperation to fight the almighty Christ of God and His glorified and unconquerable armies.

Thus the Lord Jesus and His glorified ones confront principalities and powers, the rulers of the darkness of this world, wicked spirits in high places, and blindly fanatical armies on earth. The conflict is sharp but decisive. The Goliath of earthly power and Satanic rage may oppose, but our King David soon lays all His enemies in the dust. And as if in contempt for the powers arrayed against Him, the Lord sends an angel (Rev. xix. 17, 18) who "cried with a loud voice, saying to all *the birds that fly in mid-heaven*, Come . . . that ye may eat the flesh of *kings*, and the flesh of *military tribunes*, and the flesh of *mighty men*, and of *horses*, and them that sit thereon, and . . . of all men, both free and bound, and small and great."

What a scene! Miles of country covered with the slain. The greatest of the earth, who vaunted themselves

but a few hours before against Christ—who trusted by their military skill, their fearful weapons, and their determined bravery to be able to overcome their Maker, the Almighty Creator—now lying dead, making meals for myriads of vultures. How are the mighty fallen and the weapons of war perished!

But not only are these forces conquered, but Christ and His armies follow up their victory. Revelation xix. 20: "And the BEAST was taken, and with him the FALSE PROPHET (Antichrist)." Oh, how great our blessed Master is! In the greatness of His power and strength He commands these two to be seized, and the verse says: "*They twain were cast alive into the lake of fire* that burneth with brimstone."

But the victory is to be completed. The arch enemy of souls, opponent of Christ, the instigator of all lawlessness and rebellion, is to be exposed, unearthed, dealt with summarily and imprisoned. 2 Thessalonians ii. 8: "*Then shall be revealed the lawless one* (Satan) whom the LORD JESUS shall *slay with the breath of His mouth* and PARALYSE with the *sudden shining* of His presence." Or as in Isaiah xi. 4: "With the breath of His lips shall He slay the wicked (one)."

Look at that old serpent, the devil, the source of all evil and disaster. See him there blinded with the glory of the Son of God. Behold him helplessly lying writhing, paralysed in the presence and with the sudden shining of the light of Jesus. The light of Jesus smites him down. Jesus in all His conscious power and kingly dignity, scorning even to touch this foul fiend and opponent of His

people, deputes an angel to bind him in His presence, and hurl him ignominiously into the lake of fire. Revelation xx. 1, 2: "And I saw *an angel* coming down out of heaven, having the key of the abyss, and a great chain in his hand. *And he laid hold of the dragon* . . . and *bound him* for a thousand years and cast him into the abyss."

Everything will help at this time of wonder and power to convince all living beings that Christ is the great Creator and Ruler. His advent, even apart from the wondrous myriads of saints clad in snow white robes and seated on horses, is so intimately connected with marvels in heaven and earth that no one can remain sceptical any longer. Matthew xxiv. 29 describes the *Sun* as being darkened, the *Moon* also, it says, shall not give her light, the *Stars* shall fall from heaven, the *powers* of the heavens shall be shaken, and there shall appear *the sign of the Son of Man* in heaven. Joel ii. 30 says: "I will show *wonders* in the heavens . . . the *Sun* shall be turned into darkness, and the *Moon* into blood, before the great and terrible day of the Lord. And in the *earth*, *blood* and *fire* and *pillars of smoke*."

As it begins to dawn upon the minds of the earth-dwellers what the reality of the greatness and glory of the One whom they have so persistently opposed and rebelled against is, we are told in Revelation vi. 15–17: "The *kings of the earth*, and the princes, and the military tribunes, and the rich, and the strong, and every bondman and freeman, *hid themselves* in the caves and in the rocks of the mountains, and they say to the mountains and the

rocks, *fall on us*, and *hide us* from the face of Him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb; for the great day of their wrath is come; and who is able to stand?"

This is also the time when the angels shall be associated with Christ in the work of preparing the earth for the Millennial reign of the King of kings and Lord of lords. Read St. Matthew xiii. 41: "The Son of Man shall send forth His angels, and *they shall gather out* of His kingdom all stumbling blocks, and them that do iniquity, and shall cast them into a furnace of fire; there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth." This is, I believe, a parallel passage to the one found in Luke xvii. 34–37: Two persons in one bed, one taken to outer darkness, the other left behind for the blessings of the Millennial kingdom. Two persons grinding together, and two persons in the field, one taken to the furnace of fire, the other left behind to live with Jesus on the earth. If you read verse 37 it explains, in answer to the question the Pharisees put, viz.: "Where, Lord?" "Wheresoever the carcase is, thither will the vultures be gathered together"; thus expressing the idea of the foul, putrid carcase, and the unclean birds of prey gathering around it. This could never bear the popular interpretation of the body or carcase being the Church of Christ. He would never have described it in such terms.

And now takes place on the earth the scene described in Matthew xxv. 31–45, when the nations are judged by Christ for their treatment of His people Israel. As you read you will find that Christ thoroughly associates Him-

self with His people and treats their cause as His own, Those who injured them injured Him, and He punishes them accordingly. Thus, the faithful ones inherit the kingdom and its blessings, *i.e.*, the kingdom on earth which He has just come from heaven to establish; whilst the wicked who have despised His people and scorned Him are sent into everlasting fire. Hence, we pray every day in the Lord's Prayer: "Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is done in heaven." This is what we are looking forward to, and we believe it will not be very long before that happy day arrives when our beloved Saviour, vindicated, acknowledged by all, and wielding all authority, shall sit on the throne of His father David, and reign in glory over this earth which once rejected Him and was stained by His precious blood.

The New Jerusalem

WE have seen in the preceding chapter how Jesus and His followers had applied themselves to purge from the world all things which offended, or were opposed to Him. Now, with all these things put aside, with the devil chained in the abyss for one thousand years, and the promoters of evil and rebellion swept away, Christ sets about the establishment of His Millennial kingdom and reign on earth. His glorified ones have returned with Him and, having accomplished their first great mission in association with their Lord, He bids their home and resting place, the New Jerusalem, descend from Heaven.

The idea of the New Jerusalem is not confined merely to our dispensation. In Hebrews xi. 10 we are told that *Abraham* of old "looked for *the city* which hath foundations, whose maker and builder is God." The expectations of *Abel*, *Enoch*, *Noah*, and *Sarah* are also summed up in the 16th verse: "But now they desire a better *country*, that is an heavenly: wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God; *for He hath prepared for them a city*." The Lord Jesus also says (St. John xiv. 2): "I go to prepare a *place* for you."

We have evidence that the Apostles expected and looked

for a literal New Jerusalem. Hebrews xiii. 14: "For we have not here an abiding *city*, but we seek after *the city which is to come*."

Thus the precious secret is unfolded. Our blessed Master is now above, and with the aid of the glorious hosts of heaven, whose praises have burst forth as each brand was plucked from the burning, is busily engaged in preparing this beautiful city, that presently, when the fulness of time has come, this lovely *place* which He is now at work upon, may be ready for occupation. It is thus described in Revelation iii. 12: "*The city of my God*, which is the New Jerusalem, which cometh out of heaven. Revelation xxi. 9, 10: "Come hither, I will show thee the bride, the Lamb's wife . . . *the holy Jerusalem*, descending out of heaven from God." Galatians iv. 26: "The Jerusalem that is *above* is free, which is our mother."

When the Saints have finished their work of preparing the earth for the Millennial reign, and probably as their anthems of praise ascend, with Jesus their beloved Leader and Captain in their midst; whilst the strains of the rapturous victory are the awe of hell and the delight of heaven; as they turn their glorified faces upward from the earth, the wondrous sight is seen. The stupendous, wonderful, and magnificent New Jerusalem descends out of heaven from God, and probably just as the pillar of fire and cloud of old, when Israel came out of Egypt to the earthly Jerusalem, were seen suspended between heaven and earth, so now this incomparably beautiful new work of our Blessed Master descends that it may take up its appointed position *over the earth*, suspended, having an

orbit of its own within a short distance from our world. This is the earth dwellers' first real glimpse of glory and heaven. Wonder and astonishment will no doubt seize every mind, and lead every soul to instantly acknowledge *our Jesus as King of kings and Lord of lords.*

Every Bible reader is familiar with the glowing and inspiring account of this city in Revelation xxi. and xxii. It is described as "having the glory of God"; as having "no need of the sun or the moon, for the *glory of God* did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof." The nations of the saved are to "*walk in the light of it*," thus showing it is to take the place of the sun and moon as *the illuminant of the earth.* There is to be "*no night* there"; "no temple there," because God is there personally, etc., etc.

And now a word as to its inhabitants. It is to be the home of the Bride of Christ. All the glorified ones whom Christ will bring with Him, and who constitute His Church, as we have seen, are by this time *in a glorified state*, and therefore fit to live in this new and glorious city.

This naturally leads us to ask another question—*Who are to be the earth dwellers* during this Millennial period? We reply, "The earth will be peopled by vast numbers who will not oppose Christ when He comes in glory. *These will be left to be His subjects on the earth.* Matthew xiii. 41: "The Son of Man shall send forth His angels, and they shall gather out of His Kingdom *all things that offend*, and them which do iniquity," or "Gather ye together first the *tares* and bind them in bundles to burn them; but gather the *wheat* into My barn" (verse 30).

But in order to complete all the arrangements necessary so that the Lord Jesus may gloriously triumph over the antichrist who has just been sent into the abyss, and convince the world that *He* is Lord of heaven and earth, then takes place a wonderful event, viz —

THE RESURRECTION OF LIFE, OR FIRST RESURRECTION.

The earth dwellers, thousands of whom have passed through times of severe trial and hardship, coupled with the daily anticipation of the agonies of martyrdom, with joy and triumph see *those slain as martyrs under antichrist* during the great tribulation upon earth, raised from the dead to *complete the first resurrection* from among the dead. Revelation xiii. 15: "And it was given *unto him* to give breath to it, *even* to the image of the beast, that the image of the beast should both speak, and cause that as many as should not worship the beast should be killed." Revelation vi. 9: "And when he opened the fifth seal, I saw underneath the altar *the souls of them that had been slain* for the Word of God and for *the testimony* which they held." Revelation xx. 4: "I saw *the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus* and for the Word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and *they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years.*" This is the first resurrection. St. John v. 29: "They that have done good unto *the resurrection of life.*"

Thus the raised martyrs are to be associated with the Lord Jesus in ruling and governing the very world in which but a few years before, they had been denied the privilege

of living because of their adherence to Christ. Now, on earth with Christ, "they shall hunger no more; neither thirst any more, neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat, for the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters; and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes" (Rev. vii. 16, 17).

The Millennium

WHAT a delightful sense of rest and peace is conveyed to the whole mind and soul when we contemplate the time and the blessed fact of Christ's personal reign on the earth during the period of the Millennium! After all the ungodliness, the strife, the bloodshed, and the tumults of the great tribulation, how refreshing it is to turn to the bright side of the picture where all is peace and joy and love!

We can only with difficulty *even imagine* what the world will be like when Satan and his hosts are swept away. At the present time we are, on account of sin, made to be afraid of one another. This is really the meaning of all the policemen, the detectives, and others who exist in order to protect us from violence and injury at the hands of our fellow-creatures. This is really the meaning of the carefully and strongly constructed locks, bars and shutters in our houses to keep and protect us from thieves and those who would otherwise molest us. This is the meaning of the myriads of soldiers who are trained as experts in war, as well as the great navies which constantly patrol the seas. They exist for the purpose of affording protection from the invaders who would otherwise soon come and take away

our power and position on the earth. This is the meaning of the large burglar-proof safes made to be so specially strong that our fellow-creatures cannot steal away the treasures from our midst.

We pray, "Thy will be done on earth as it is done in heaven." In heaven there is no sin, no Devil, no opposing forces, therefore no need of locks, bars, policemen, or soldiers. Our prayer will be answered presently, when Jesus reigns, for *His will* shall then be done on earth. How delightful it will be to have newspapers with no news in them of wars and rumours of wars, no miserable divorce cases, no police news of our fellow creatures being condemned to imprisonments for law-breaking of various kinds; no intrigues and scandals; no strikes or conflicts between employers and employed; no national, social, or personal quarrels; but column after column chronicling the delights, the happiness, and the love which characterize the world, and especially the blessings bestowed through the rapid and unparalleled spread of the Gospel throughout the length and breadth of the then God-blessed and beautiful earth.

The first great work to be performed is to crown Jesus King of kings and Lord of lords at Jerusalem. Luke i. 32: "The Lord God shall give unto Him *the throne of His father David*, and *He shall reign* over the house of Jacob for ever." All coronations ever known or read of in history will be entirely eclipsed at that wondrous time. The spectacle will be absolutely unique, as the Saviour who was taken outside its walls to Calvary to be crucified, now amid the homage, the praises, the joyous and holy festivities and the splendour of myriads of glorified saints, thousands of

raised martyrs, the hosts of heaven and the most distinguished persons on earth, is publicly crowned as King at Jerusalem.

No wonder the prophet Zechariah (ii. 10) says, "Sing and rejoice, O daughter of Zion, for, lo, I come, and I will dwell in the midst of thee, saith the Lord." Isaiah xxiv. 23: "The Lord of Hosts *shall reign in Mount Zion, and in Jerusalem*, and before His ancients gloriously." Isaiah ix. 7: "Of the increase of His *government and peace* there shall be no end, upon *the throne of David*, and upon His Kingdom, to order it and to establish it with judgment and justice from henceforth even for ever."

We have often heard and read of the Court of Queen Victoria, with all the glory and splendour associated with it, but what will the Court of the Lord Jesus be like? Revelation xix. 16: "His name is given as King of kings and Lord of lords." All the *possessions* which the Devil at His temptation promised Him if only He would fall down and worship him, are now His own by right. Revelation xi. 15: "The Kingdoms of this world are become *the Kingdoms* of our Lord and of His Christ; and He shall reign for ever and ever." Psalm lxxii. 11 says: "All *kings* shall fall down before Him: all *nations* shall serve Him." At the time of the Transfiguration, when Christ was enshrouded in glory, the Apostles would have built Tabernacles to perpetuate the glory. But this would have been to localise and participate in it before the time. The glorified Christ will, as He sits in power and authority in Jerusalem, satisfy both the Jew and the Gentile. It will be impossible for any potentate to compete with Him, or for

any to doubt His right to power or authority. Displayed in greater glory than Adam had before He sinned, this second Adam, this seed of David, this King of Israel, will be universally acknowledged as the Messiah of the Jews, and the Saviour of all who believe. We shall then understand practically what such texts as Romans viii. 17 mean: "If children, then *heirs*; heirs of God, and *joint heirs with Christ*," *i.e.*, associated *with* Him in enjoying the family possessions. Colossians i. 12: "Meet to be *partakers of the inheritance* of the saints in light."

We speak with pride also to-day of the great colonies and possessions of Great Britain. We say the sun never sets on Victoria's dominions. Quite true. Still, we must remember, they are only part of the world. There are many other powers and nations constantly contending over every new strip of tertitory opened up. We are only *one* of the great powers. Our court is brilliant, but there are also several other brilliant courts. Our dominion is wide, but other powers have also wide dominions.

When Jesus reigns in the Millennium (Zech. xiv. 9), "THE LORD shall be *King over all the earth*; in that day there shall be *one* Lord, and His name one." Seated in Jerusalem as the great centre of earth's government, either by the use of our earthly telegraph system, or by direct angelic message, or some other speedy mode of communication, Jesus will hold in His unerring hands the reins of government over all the earth. *He* knows all languages, He knows all the geography of the world He made, He knows all the peoples collectively and individually. He understands and knows all hearts with all their desires and

ambitions whether good or bad. He is the great fountain of wisdom, and foreknows all things from the beginning. He is also almighty and all powerful. He knows where the riches of the earth lie which He created and stored up ages since for the use of His subjects. The forces of Nature, whose secrets seemed to be so reluctantly yielded up to man after all the years of his study and investigation, were ordained and set in order by the Lord the King. How easy, then, to imagine what will be the rapidity of the strides made in scientific investigation, when the great Author of the secrets of the earth and hitherto insoluble problems is the King, the Friend, the Lecturer. What an impetus to learning and study in the arts and sciences when war is no more needed and when men are set free from the study of naval and military arms and strategies. "Neither shall they learn war any more" (Isa. ii. 4). Jesus will delight again in His people on the earth. The "Morning stars shall again sing together, and all the sons of God shout for joy," when, with Jesus in their midst, Jerusalem shall be a praise upon the earth. Can you wonder then that *Israel shall be restored to their own land* (Jer. xxxiii. 6–8), that they shall be glad and rejoice with such great promises as Zephaniah iii. 14–20? With Christ as King they will have *safety* secured without locks, bars, policemen, or soldiers. They will have *great wealth* from all the nations gathered in, they will have *holiness and glorious services*, even consecrating the harness of the horses and the cooking utensils to the Lord Jesus (Zech. xiv. 8–21).

One text concerning the Millennium will suggest at once to your mind *a perfect luxury of blessing.* I refer to Isaiah

xxxiii. 24: "And the inhabitants shall not say I am sick: the people that dwell therein shall be forgiven their iniquity."

It means there will be none of those painful diseases which now cause such great distress to our fellow creatures. There will be no cases of consumption wasting away the frame, with its accompanying hollow cough. We may search in vain for the cancers and tumours and other internal diseases which cause such numbers of operations to be performed at the present time. There will then, because Jesus the *great* Physician is in charge of the world, be no rheumatism, no lumbago or sciatica, no toothache, no bilious attacks. We shall need no medicine, hence chemists' shops will disappear. We shall need no doctors, hence men will cease from those years of toil and study needed for the purpose of qualifying for the profession. The great infirmaries and hospitals of our large cities and towns will have no patients who will need operations or bone setting, or nursing. There will be no need of large numbers of ladies to train as nurses to tend the suffering and the dying, or to go on the battlefield to bind up wounds amidst ghastly sights and scenes of carnage. The undertaker will look, and look almost in vain, for orders. He will find it the hardest thing possible to keep up his establishment, or make his business pay, as there will be so few interments. In Isaiah lxv. 20 we read: "There shall be no more thence *an infant of days*, nor *an old man that hath not filled his days:* for *the child* shall die an hundred years old; but *the sinner* being an hundred years old shall be accursed."

The above teaches us clearly that *longevity* is to be restored. Before the flood, men lived as long as nearly a thousand years. One dying at a hundred years old was practically an infant or youth; but sin has altered all this, and the years of man have been reduced now to threescore years and ten. Thus, all those who are obedient to Christ, having the longevity restored will probably live all through the Millennial time and be glorified afterwards with Christ. It will not be an age of rush and worry, or keen competition and stock exchange excitements, but an age of peace and rest. The fact is, we shall have *time to live*, and to enjoy life to the full, not with wicked things which undermine the constitution and deprave the whole being, but healthy, manly outdoor occupations and exercises, which will keep us in good health and spirits.

In Isaiah xxxv. 5, 6, we have a most graphic picture brought before us. As soon as Christ takes up His position as King—no doubt by His orders and through His power—all the people in the world who are *blind* will receive their sight. From every blind asylum streams of poor people will issue forth shouting for joy as their sight is restored. From every institution for the *deaf and dumb*, the inmates will be frantic with joy at finding that Jesus has touched their tongues and ears with His hand of love and power, and from every prison in the world will leap forth *prisoners* of each sex and every age to testify that the prison doors were found open, and the edict of their emancipation read before them. Oh, with what gladness and lightness of heart will the poor *convicts* at Dartmoor and other places leap forth into the freedom and liberty

proclaimed by King Jesus. Oh, with what ecstatic joy will the poor *exiles* in the mines of Siberia hear the good news that oppression, wrong and exile are banished by the good Shepherd who loves them and has come from heaven to lead them beside the green pastures and the waters of quietness. And what a time of comfort and blessing for the people in *workhouses* which Christian liberality has built. The doors will be flung wide open for those whom poverty has pinched. The plentiful supply of health, and the bountiful gift of land to cultivate in the renewed earth, will open up new dreams of happiness and new possibilities of joy under the new and altered conditions brought about by King Jesus. There will be no *oppression* between class and class, no opposing forces amongst the "classes and the masses," *all injustice* will be instantly redressed (see Psalm lxxii. 12, 14, xcviii. 9), and "all" will be "one in Christ Jesus."

Another picture in Isaiah lxv. is, "They shall *build houses*, and inhabit them; and they shall *plant vineyards* and eat the fruit of them. They shall not build and another inhabit; they shall not plant, and another eat; for *as the days of a tree* are the days of my people, and mine elect shall long enjoy the work of their hands." You can easily imagine the picture of quiet restful work as each one builds his own house and has his own land with his orchard and garden. There being no open sin, no one will be at all interfered with. All they have to do is to obey the laws of the King at Jerusalem who will regulate what each one has to do, what land and occupation he is to have, and give him the fullest freedom and liberty in his

life. His life is to be so long, that he shall plant trees of various kinds and live as long as they live. To the eastern in Palestine, the tree which would naturally suggest itself would be such as the olive, the cedar, etc. These trees easily live for 1,000 years or more. Oh, what a paradise earth will be when, with the devil chained, sin swept away, man at peace with man and nation with nation, man's life prolonged to 1,000 years or more, with robust health, with improved climates, with freedom from cyclones, howling tempests, sickness, poverty, death and the innumerable evils which torment and distress man in his present condition, with holiness to the Lord the great object of life, and with Christ actually living in the midst; it will surely be a happy foretaste of heaven above brought into the earth below. And, so in order to make the picture complete, we are told in this chapter "they shall not labour in vain, nor bring forth for trouble; for they are the seed of the blessed of the Lord, and their offspring with them." How many we have known who have brought forth for trouble. How many dear children have been snatched away from their mothers' arms and laid in a sorrowing grave! How many times the joy and light of the home has been taken away just as it has become endeared to the household by its childish prattle! How many times have we seen the heart broken as the coffin has entered the door to take away the precious treasure, once so joyous, but now only a piece of clay!

Or again, how often has that child, whose early life gave such promise of future hope and comfort to the proud and doting parents, blasted the hopes and cruelly shattered all

the castles in the air built for him in their love. How many sons in their early career have taken the first steps of the prodigal, afterwards to find that each step had only led them further and further from their once-loved parents and from all the hallowed associations of youth. How many parents have died through watching and grieving over the abandoned recklessness of sons and daughters who once were the joy of their lives and homes, but now, almost as though possessed by evil spirits who utterly controlled them, dragging the honoured names of parents and home into the unholy mire of their unrepented shame. In the Millennium, thank God, these sad experiences will be forgotten. Even the animals will live peaceably together. "The wolf and the lamb shall feed together, and the lion shall eat straw like the bullock; and dust shall be the serpent's meat. *They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain saith the Lord.*"

Thus the blessing of Christ's rule and presence will be enjoyed by everything living both in the animal and vegetable kingdoms, except by the serpent, or snake. *Dust shall be the serpent's meat* is the decree. Even then we shall be reminded of what sin has done, and as we see all things living enjoying Christ's blessing except the serpent, it will bring more forcibly than ever to our minds the fact of Christ's redemption and Christ's power, who has bruised the Serpent's head, and still holds even his reptile representatives on the earth under His iron grasp and hand.

Ezekiel xxxiv. 25–30 gives us a further picture: "*A covenant of peace*, they shall dwell safely in the *wilderness* and sleep in the *woods*." Lie down anywhere, dear child

of God There will be no need of lighting a fire to keep away the wild beasts by night. The howling of the hyænas and jackals will not keep thee in a state of nervous strain, for they have all lost their ferocity, their thirst for blood. Unprotected man or woman you may safely go alone into the wilderness or any other place. No Bedouin Arab with wild mein and glittering spear or pointed gun will assail you. Ferocity in man and beast will have ceased. Natures will be changed, and amid the peace of perfect safety, "the sucking child shall play on the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put his hand on the cockatrice den," unharmed. "They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain" (Isa. lxv.).

I cannot say it is really easy to imagine what the world will be like when there is no war, no soldiers, no policemen, no doctors, no nurses, etc.; one picture possibly may help us to try and live in this time through our imagination for a brief space.

Isaiah ii.: "Many people shall go and say, *Come ye*, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob; and He will teach us of His ways, and we will walk in His paths." How different this will be from the present condition of things. Only the few now are thirsting to know God's ways and walk in His paths. The great masses of the world's population are either sunk in almost hopeless heathenism, or lapsed into open sin or wilful apathy and indifference about the things of God. It is now, alas! with so many, even on God's day—Come with us to the theatre, the dance, the public-house, the Sabbath railway excursion, the drunken feast. Then, it will be that all will be of one mind in really seeking the

Lord. It will *become popular to speak of Jesus*, and, oh, wondrous miracle! no one will be ashamed of mentioning His name or owning their allegiance to Him either in private or public. In fact, people will go so far that Jeremiah xxiii. 6 tells us they shall speak of Him as THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS. Every one will be religious. Open unbelief will be unknown. People will even go to such lengths and be so determined to be consecrated in everything that when ordering their pots, pans, horses' harness, etc., to be made, they will have burnt in or engraved the words, HOLINESS UNTO THE LORD.

Oh, what a joy it will be then to minister to eager and attentive congregations. What numbers of churches we shall then need, each as large as Spurgeon's Tabernacle or St. Paul's Cathedral. Sermonettes will disappear, and the popular demand for long detailed Bible-readings will raise up an army of devoted enthusiastic students of God's Word. What wonders will then be unfolded from the books of Moses, the historical books, the psalms and the prophets! What Bible-searching competitions, what Bible talks! It will then be looked upon as disgraceful not to know much of God's Word. There will then be no difficulty in getting it fully and thoroughly taught by consecrated teachers in the schools, for all will love it, and the demand for it will cause the supply. For "out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem" (Isa. ii. 3). May that happy time soon come, when Jesus shall reign as King at Jerusalem, no more the crucified and condemned prisoner, but as the Son of God with power, King of kings and Lord of lords.

The Great White Throne

THIS is *the final judgment of God for the wicked*, and must not be in any way confused with the judgment-seat of Christ for believers after "the rapture," or with the judgment of the living nations on earth, at the beginning of the millennium, for their treatment of Israel.

All believers by this time are cleansed by His precious blood, identified with Him; and thus, as the blood of Jesus, God's Son, cleanseth us from all sin, it will be found as in Romans viii. 1, "there is therefore now no judgment to them which are in Christ Jesus" (St. John v. 24): "He that . . . believeth . . . shall not enter into judgment," etc.

The Apostle most impressively writes (Rev. xx. 11), "And I saw *a great white throne*, and Him that sat upon it, from whose face the EARTH and the HEAVEN fled away; and there was found no place for them."

Why did the earth flee away? Because it was stained by sin and with the blood of the Son of God.

Why did the heaven, or the firmament flee away? Because it had been the dwelling-place of Christ's enemy, "the prince of the power of the air." Read also 2 Pet. iii.

10–12; Mark xiii. 31; Isa. ii. 6; Rev. xx. 41; Heb. i. 11, 12.

Christ now takes His seat. The Father hath given Him authority to execute judgment also, because He is the Son of Man (1 John v. 27). All power is given unto Him in heaven and in earth. And so, in obedience to His command, for the first time (Rev. xx. 13), *The sea* gave up *the dead* which were in it, and *death* and *Hades* gave up *the dead* which were in them (ver. 12). And I saw *the dead*, the great and the small (*i.e.* in earthly position), stand before the throne (St. John v. 29). And shall come forth; they that have done evil, unto *the resurrection of damnation.* Thus at the bidding of Christ, the unholy dead are yielded up to stand before Him. All over the earth these rebellious bodies are raised, from graves, from cemeteries, or vaults under the churches, to meet the souls which have so long been in Hades as unclothed or disembodied spirits. There they are in ghastly procession. And even the sea *must*, by the authority of the Lord Christ, give up its dead to stand before the Great White Throne for judgment (St. John v. 22). For *the Father judgeth no man*, but hath committed all judgment unto THE SON.

Daniel vii. 9, 10, gives us the picture. "I beheld till the thrones were cast down, and THE ANCIENT OF DAYS DID SIT, whose garment was white as snow, and the hair of His head like pure wool His throne was like the fiery flame, and His wheels as burning fire. A fiery stream issued and came forth before Him: thousand thousands ministered unto Him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before Him: *the judgment was set, and the books were*

opened." Or, as in Revelations xx. 12, "And the books were opened, and THE DEAD were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works."

The awful fact comes before us in all its solemn horror, that from the time of Adam's fall, all those who have died in an unsaved condition have been turned into Hades; *but*, as Hades is not the final doom of the wicked, we read, Revelation xx. 14, "And *death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death.*"

Thus all the unsaved dead from Adam's time *shall be brought before the Great White Throne at the end of the millennium.* During all the times of blessedness in which God's children are reigning with Christ in the New Jerusalem, and are occupying positions of blessedness as kings and priests unto Him—during all that time the wicked dead are in their graves. Through all the dispensations from Adam downwards, they have no resurrection. There are two resurrections—one to life, and the other to condemnation. Theirs is the resurrection of condemnation as mentioned in St. John v. 29.

Now, dear reader, *if you are unsaved*, and you die in an unsaved condition, you will go first of all through the first death, and through the first death into Hades. That is plain. You will remain there until the end of the millennium, and you will miss all the blessings of being with Christ during that glorious time.

And, remember, the first time in which you are brought out of Hades into which you have been placed, will be to appear before God at the Great White Throne. "The books will be opened." What are the books? So far as

I can find out, they are two—one the Law, and the other the Gospel. Those who have perished *before* the time of the Gospel will be judged out of the Law; and those who perish, *having heard the Gospel*, will be judged *by* the Gospel.

Now, what is the significance of the third book? The third book—the Book of Life—*is opened there as a challenge to every soul* who is brought before the Great White Throne, to find his name there. You notice that in the two books the persons are judged for their *works*. The deeds of sin are recorded in those two books, and the persons are to be judged out of them; but the third book—the Book of Life—only contains the *names of persons*, not their deeds.

"The names of those who are written in the Lamb's book of life." Thank God! What a precious thing it is when you know your name is written there, and you can put your head on the pillow and say, "I am my Beloved's" My name is written there; and I know this, that the devil cannot get into the book which the Lamb—the Lion of Judah—has in His own safe keeping. He is the Omnipotent One, and that book is sealed; my name is written there, and it can never be erased.

We turn to the twenty-first chapter and the eighth verse (of the Revelation), and we see that death and Hades are cast into the lake of fire; then it tells us there *who* shall go into this second death—and the *second death is the most dreadful thing we read of in the whole Bible.* We read that "the fearful, and unbelieving and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth

with fire and brimstone; which is the second death." Death means separation. The *first death is* separation of the soul from the body; and the *second death* is the separation of the soul from God, combined with the judgment, that it shall be put into the lake of fire.

Let us think of these words mentioned in this eighth verse, and see if they apply to any of us. First of all we take the "*fearful and unbelieving*." Who are they? They are those who are afraid to confess God. They are afraid or ashamed to confess that they are sinners. I wonder, have you got that far, to confess that you are a poor, lost sinner? If you have not, what is it to you if we speak of the glorious appearing of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ? Why it is a terrible thing to you. Do you pray, "*Thy kingdom come*," in the Lord's prayer? Do you know you are praying for something terrible? You say, "Our Father, which art in heaven," and God is not your father at all if you are still an unsaved man. "*Hallowed be thy Name*." Why, the first thing in which you ought to hallow God's Name is by believing in His Son whom He has sent. And if you pray, "Thy kingdom come," you are practically praying for your own destruction. Do not use that prayer if you do not know God! "Thy will be done on earth," you say, and the will of God is that you believe on Jesus whom He hath sent, and you do not believe on Him. But yet you say, "Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven."

Let us be brought face to face with facts. Let us be brought face to face with God and with ourselves, and let us deal with God honestly. Let us judge ourselves, that

we be not judged. Let us ask ourselves, "Is God our Father? Is Jesus our Saviour? Has the Holy Spirit really revealed Christ to us? And can we really look forward with joy and expectancy to the time when the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ shall come to take His own children?" And mind, Jesus Christ calls His own sheep by name, for He knows your name. Do you know *your* children? And do you think Christ will make a mistake? If a strange child comes and sits down in your house at the table, and says "Father" to you, you will not accept that child if it is a stranger, and is not one of your own family. If a strange child comes in and says, "Mother, I want so and so," you say, "You have come to the wrong house. I am not your mother!" And you expect the Lord Jesus Christ to be deceived when He comes for His children, simply because you have the garb or the language of the saints? No! you may put on the garb or use the language of the saints, and you may use the most religious expressions; but Jesus knows His children. He calls them by their name; and He will not call one except He has the name written in the family register—the Lamb's Book of Life.

The "unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers." Who are the abominable? Those who do things hateful to God. And who are the "sorcerers?" Why, the mesmerists and the spiritualists; and there are a great many of them.

Yes, there are a great many who are playing with these things, and they do not know what it is going to lead them to. But God says they are going to the lake of fire. Have

nothing to do with them, I beseech you. Fortune-tellers, and all other such people, are all summed up in that word "sorcerers" Then the liars and hypocrites—those who appear to be good men when they are not. God knows them, and He will reproduce their photograph accurately presently. The tradesman who tricks and designs, and who cheats his customers—that is one of the men who will have to go to the lake of fire. The "unbelieving and the idolaters," the professing Christians who live for sinful and selfish indulgences.

Men who have gold, riches and treasures set up in their hearts. Yes, idolaters of any kind whatever—who have set their thoughts and affections upon persons, pleasures, or things which estrange them from God.

After the Millennium

"KNOWN unto God are all His works from the beginning." If we are not assured of this by God Himself, it would probably be very difficult to keep our minds from criticising God and His plans for ruling and ordering the world. "Shall not the judge of all the earth do right?" was the question asked by Abraham, as if challenging any to prove that God could possibly make a mistake. In reviewing God's work amid many perplexities and things hard to understand, one is bound to come back to the fact that—(1) We have to deal with an unchangeable God; (2) This God is omniscient, *i.e.*, He knows everything both in the past and *what is to take place in the future*; (3) He is Almighty, *i.e.*, nothing can successfully oppose His will, for He is infinitely superior in strength to any power which exists in heaven, hell, or earth, thus everything and everybody are absolutely under His control; (4) He is infinitely wise, knowing all the exact bearings as well as the ultimate issues of each case and each life, and He ordereth all things as seemeth best to His Godly wisdom.

Again, we see in men, even by nature, an innate love of justice, a feeling of pity for those in distress and misery, and a shrinking from the grosser forms of evil. Who gave

these finer feelings and instincts to man? Who is the author of justice, purity, kindness, and goodness? Unless we concede at once that the author who implanted in our breasts these instincts, with all their moral forces, is God, the Lord Jehovah, we should look and look in vain for an answer.

Now, if God is the *author* of these finer moral senses which elevate and ennoble man, if He plants these in our breasts just as He breathes into our nostrils the breath of life, cannot we most confidently and restfully ask the question, "Shall not the judge of all the earth do right" in all things and at all times? We finite, short-sighted creatures will at once see how necessary it is to suspend our judgment of God and His works, and, laying our heads upon Jesu's gentle breast, lean hard, trusting when we cannot understand, and praising even amid tears and trials, knowing that His definite statement is, "All things work together for good to them that love God, who are the called according to His purpose" (Rom. viii. 28).

Thus we have to *trust and praise*, even when we are told that at the end of the millennium SATAN IS TO BE LOOSED out of His prison for *a little season*, and shall go out to deceive the nations.

Many seemed puzzled to know why God should let Satan out of prison, as He has power to keep him in. Others ask questions as to who the people can possibly be who are to be deceived by Satan. The characteristics of the reign of Christ are very great and definite, and if we properly understand them, they will help us to comprehend somewhat of God's great purposes. Nothing is of a haphazard

character with God. "*Known unto God are all His works from the beginning.*"

The great purpose of God in giving the millennium, or period of rest and blessing under the direct supervision of Christ as King, is that a final object-lesson should be given both to heaven and earth as to the innate evil of man's nature and its irremediable condition in itself.

The millennial period will be specially set apart by God for *the final trial and testing of man under the most favourable conditions possible*, viz.:—

(1) Satan chained in the abyss;

(2) All who *resist Christ* swept off the earth;

(3) Wondrous *fertility and prosperity* all over the world;

(4) *No open evil or evils* anywhere on the earth;

(5) *Christ reigning* in righteousness over *all* the world;

(6) *The established worship* of Christ over all the earth.

You would probably conclude that under these conditions all would so love and reverence Christ that even if evil came in its most subtle and tempting form it would have no soil in which it could take root. Alas, as the Psalmist tells us—"The heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked; who can know it?" Thus there will still be the professors and the possessors—the two classes of changed and unchanged—although no doubt all will then wear an outwardly religious exterior. There will still be the latent unsatisfied longing for the flesh pots of Egypt; the continual lack of sympathy with Christ's rule, and the want of joyful conformity to His will. *Hearts that are not fully surrended to Him will only even then yield Him feigned obedience;* not from a free choice, but because

there will be nothing else they can do under the circumstances. With Satan away, there will be no active power to stir up, organize, or lead forth the evil propensities; hence, though still there, they will be in more or less of a dormant condition. Like the locusts hidden away beneath the stones, they will come out at their appointed time with all the instincts quickened into activity, and ready to do the will of their new leader.

Hence, in order to thoroughly test mankind as to who are His, and who are not, Satan is loosed for a short season, and thus man is called upon to make *a final voluntary choice* between a personal CHRIST and a personal SATAN.

As Satan comes forth to deceive the nations he will be hailed with joy and gladness of heart by those who neither love nor wish to serve the Lord Christ. It will not take long to practically demonstrate the fact that "*the natural heart* of man is *at enmity* with God, for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be." Ample proof will then be seen that the heart of man is *just the same* under a *reigning* Christ as under a *suffering* one.

And, alas! dreadful to relate, the infatuation of the people will be such that Satan finds them to be an easy prey. As soon as he appears they flock under his banner, and that beautiful renewed earth upon which the cries of battle, the thunder of artillery, the throes of contending hosts have been absent for a millennium of years is now shocked, as described in Revelation xx. 8, 9. Satan shall go out to deceive the nations which are in the *four quarters of the earth*, Gog and Magog, to gather them together to battle, the number of whom is as the sands of the sea.

Look at them as they, with one accord, led by the mighty power of the devil, gather together from all parts an exceedingly great army, *to fight the Christ of God and to assail His people.* It seems almost incredible that the people who have so long enjoyed the blessings of peace and prosperity should now deliberately choose to engage in the utter madness and folly of warring with God's Almighty Son.

Christ permits them to assemble together.

No orders are issued from Jerusalem to suppress the ever-growing rebellion. All the arrangements are being perfected; the plan of campaign issues forth from a great council of war. They are to assemble together, and, *led by the great Satan*, are to besiege Jerusalem and take it by storm.

Does Christ know what they are doing? Has no one informed Him? Has He no power left, or is He quailing before this formidable world-wide and unparallelled rebellion? Why does He not gather together His forces to check these gathering assailants? Is He not going to make *any* countermove? Is He going to allow them to destroy His City and His people? The Lord Jesus can afford to wait. He who sits in heaven laughs them to scorn. Revelation xx. 9: "And they went up over the breadth of the earth, and *compassed the camp of the saints about, and the beloved City.*"

The first time the Lord Jesus was assailed, He permitted Himself to be led forth out of the gates of Jerusalem, and there be crucified. This was that the great purpose of His heart in redemption might be accomplished. Now, He

looks upon the assembled multitudes of His rebellious, devil-possessed creatures, who, blinded with their own fanaticism, actually come to take Him prisoner and slay Him again. And as He looks at them in contempt, calm in the consciousness of His almighty power, He who at the beginning of the millennium destroyed the wicked with the breath of His mouth—He who in Gethsemane refused, for our sakes, to call forth from heaven twelve legions of angels for His own help—now looks upward to heaven. It is the signal of Christ. In a moment the heavens are opened, the fires of God leap forth, and to the astonished gaze of the enemies of Christ the flames descend, until, enveloped in destruction, they are devoured by the wrath of God.

1 Corinthians xv. 25: "He must reign, till He hath put all enemies under His feet." And so, as Christ stands there, supreme, majestic, Lord of heaven and earth—all earthly enemies and sin swept away for ever—He, in the greatness of His power, gives orders, and at once His arch-enemy, "*the Devil*, that wicked Serpent, is seized and cast into *the lake of fire and brimstone*, where are also *the beast and the false prophet; and they shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever*" (Rev. xx. 10).

Thus, with all wickedness and the wicked swept away (Rev. xxi. 5), He that sat upon the Throne said, "Behold, I make *all things new*." God and His Family will thus dwell together for ever in undisturbed bliss and glory (Rev. xxi. 3, 4). "And I heard a great voice out of heaven, saying, Behold the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself shall be with them, their God. And God

shall wipe away ALL tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any pain, for the former things are passed away

HALLELUJAH!!

Printed in Great Britain by Butler & Tanner Ltd., Frome and London